

*Lib. 4. 21.*

A  
DISCOURSE  
CONCERNING  
The Inventions of Men  
IN THE  
WORSHIP  
OF  
GOD.

By *William Lord Bishop of Derry.*  
For the Instruction of his Diocess.

The Second Edition Reviewed by the Authour:  
Together with an Demonstration to the Dissent-  
ing Inhabitants of the Diocess of Derry,  
concerning Mr. *J. Boyse's* Remarks, &c.

D U B L I N,

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Authour's design in this *Treatise* was, to consider only the *Ordinary Service* of Our Church, which is performed every Lord's Day, and at which every body that joyns with us in Worship, must be present : As to the *Occasional Offices*, such as *Baptism*, *Confirmation*, *Burying the Dead*, *Marriage*, &c. they will deserve a distinct Consideration; And notwithstanding the Exceptions that any Persons may have against them (which yet ought not to hinder their frequenting our *Ordinary Worship*) He doubts not but upon due Examination, it will appear, that there is nothing prescribed in them by Our Church, but what is Warranted and agreeable to the Word of God.





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# DISCOURSE

## CONCERNING

### The Introduction of God

### The Worship of GOD.

#### The Introduction

I. OUR Blessed Saviour hath taught us that  
there are four things which we must  
do to please God, and to obtain his  
blessing and favour. These are, to love  
him with all our heart, mind, and strength;  
to love our neighbour as ourselves;  
to keep his commandments; and to  
fear him. Now, the first of these is  
the most important, and the most  
difficult. For, if we do not love  
God, we cannot love our neighbour,  
and we cannot keep his commandments.  
Therefore, let us first of all, endeavour  
to love God with all our heart, mind,  
and strength. This is the first and  
greatest commandment. And, if we  
do this, we shall be able to do the  
other three. For, if we love God,  
we shall love our neighbour, and we  
shall keep his commandments. And, if  
we love God, we shall fear him. For,  
if we love him, we shall be afraid of  
his wrath, and of his punishment. And,  
if we love him, we shall be desirous  
to please him, and to do his will. And,  
if we love him, we shall be able to  
resist all the temptations of the  
devil, of the world, and of the flesh.  
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A  
DISCOURSE  
CONCERNING  
The Inventions of Men  
IN  
The Worship of GOD.

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*The Introduction.*

I. **O**UR Blessed Saviour has taught us that there are some Ways of Worshipping God, which are *Fain*, and unacceptable to Him, *Mark VII. 7. In vain, saith He, do they worship Me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* This obligeth every Man who has a concern for his Soul, to examine carefully the Worship he offers to God, whether it be such as God has Instituted; least his Service should be Rejected with that censure in the Prophet, *Who has required this at your Hands?* But more especially it concerns the Pastors of the Church, who have the Direction of the Publick Worship of God,

God, to be careful in Examining this Matter, that they may be able to satisfy their own Consciences, as well as the People's committed to their Charge, concerning the Purity of the Worship which they practice Themselves, and recommend to Others.

II. It has pleased God in his Providence to make Mean Overseer over some part of his Flock in this Kingdom; and I look upon it to be my Duty to use my Endeavours to Instruct Those that are committed to my Charge, in the Worship of God, according to the Rules He has prescribed; and to warn such as I conceive to differ from them, of their Mistakes. I hope it will be of Use and Satisfaction to those that joyn with Me in the Publick Worship of God, to find on Examination, That what they there practice, is agreeable to God's Institution: As for those that think otherwise, I persuade my self that an Admonition in the Spirit of Meekness can give them no just Offence, but rather be of Use to them also, by obliging them to Examine and Revise their Ways, that they may correct their Judgments, if from what I offer, they shall see reason for it.

III. In Order to help those concerned to make a True and Impartial Judgment in these matters, I desire them to consider,

1<sup>st</sup>. That it belongs only to God to give Rules how He will be worshiped. This I suppose, will be granted by all, since it seems to be a Truth naturally implanted in the Minds of Men; and Universally acknowledged in all Times.

2<sup>dly</sup>. I take it for a Truth agreed to by the generality of Protestants, That the Holy Scriptures contain the Revelations of God's Will, concerning his worship.

3<sup>dly</sup>. From these two, we may reasonably infer, That it concerns us to keep close as we can to those Directions which God himself has so often set us in his Word;



## Introduction

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*Word*; without adding to, omitting, or altering any thing that He has there laid down. For since God has vouchsafed us a certain Direction for his Worship in the *Holy Scriptures*, it is to be supposed that all Ways of Worship are displeasing to Him, that are not expressly contained, or warranted by Examples of *Holy Men* mentioned therein, or may not be deduced by plain consequence, or by parity of reason from them: And I conceive that all such ways of Worship are properly to be called *Humane Inventions*.

4thly. We must observe that the Worship of God is either *Inward* or *Outward*; The *Inward* Worship of God consists in the *Inward Homage* and *Subjection* of our Minds to Him. The *Outward* consists of such Acts and Duties as serve to express this *Inward Subjection* of our Souls, or that promote, increase, or contribute towards it. Thus, for Instance, *Vocal Prayer* is a part of *Outward* Worship, because it expresses the *inward Dependence* of our Souls on God: Thus *reading the Word of God* is a part of the same; because therein we acknowledge our subjection to Him, and to his Laws, and use it as a means to promote and increase this Subjection. Thus *Celebration of the Sacraments* is a part of the same Worship, because in them we not only express our Dependence on God for his Grace, but likewise oblige and bind our selves to serve Him: And the same holds in all *Outward Acts* of Worship.

5thly. We must remember, That 'tis in these *Outward Acts* that we are more immediately concerned as Publick Worshipers; for we cannot know the *Inward Worship* which Men pay to God in their Minds, but as it appears to us by these *Outward Acts*: And generally when we speak of the Publick Worship of God, we mean this *Outward*; and concerning it are the great



Disputes and Differences amongst us ; all of us being agreed as to the *Inward*, and of what sort that ought to be.

IV. Having premised these few things, which I hope will be granted by all ; I shall proceed directly to my Proposed Undertaking, and shall with the greatest Fairness and Impartiality I can, Examine and Compare the Worship of God, which is directed and Warranted by Scripture, as well with that which is prescribed and practis'd by Our Church, as with that which is practis'd by such as differ from us.

Now if we Consider the Ordinary Service of God, as prescribed and practis'd in Scripture, we shall find the main substantial parts of it to be these Five : viz.

*Prayers.*

*Singing.*

*Reading.*

*Holy Communion.*

And,

*Celebration of the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.*

The Method I shall take in Discoursing of each of these, shall be,

First, To shew what the Holy Scriptures direct concerning them particularly.

Secondly, I shall consider the Practice of Our Church, with Relation to those Directions and Examples. And,

Thirdly, The Practice of Protestant Dissenters.

## CHAP. I.

### Of Praises.

#### Dist. I.

*What the Holy Scriptures prescribe concerning them.*

I. **F**irst, as to the Praises of God. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, require the use of the Psalms in offering up Praises to God. We find in the Old Testament ( 2 Chron. xxix. 30 ) Hezekiah the King, and the Princes, commanded the Levites to sing Praises to the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph, and they sang with gladness. This Command of Hezekiah proceeded from God, and was approved by him: the same way of praising God continued in the Jewish Church till our Saviour's time: And after that we have yet a more positive Command for the use of them by the Apostles, Eph. v. 19. *Speaking to your selves in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; And Col. iii. 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; singing and making melody with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* I think there is no room to doubt, but by the Psalms, &c. in these places, is meant the

The *Book of Psalms*, which the Holy Ghost has left for this purpose to the Church. And 'tis Observable through both the Old and New Testament, that *Thanksgivings* for general or particular Mercies, are express by way of *Hymns* or *Psalms*: So *Moses* and the Children of *Israel* express their Thanksgiving for their Deliverance from *Pharaoh*; so *Deborah* for her Victory; *Hannah* for her Son; and *David* on several occasions. And in the New Testament, the Blessed *Virgin*, *Zacharias* and *Simeon*, do each express their Thanksgiving in a *Hymn* of Praise; And thus the Saints and Blessed Angels in the Revelations constantly express theirs.

'Tis from the great Providence of God that we are furnish'd with so many Forms of Thanksgiving in the Holy Scriptures: that there can hardly happen any Blessing unto us for which we are not there provided with a Form proper to express the Greatfulest Sense of our Hearts, and with much more Authority and Life then can be done by any Composition merely Human; for which I appeal to the experience of those who have liv'd these *Psalms* and *Hymns* with Devotion; therefore when any Extraordinary Mercy happens to us, we ought to express our Thankfulness in some of these, whatever we do besides.

II. The Scriptures recommend to us *Singing of Psalms*, yet in some cases they allow us to *say* them; I will not insist on those places of Scripture that seem to require us to do so, such as *Ps. cxxxiii. 2. Let Israel now say that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the House of Aaron now say, and let them that fear the Lord now say, &c.* Because these expressions being Poetical, may be so interpreted as to mean *Singing*, (tho' there is no necessity of restraining the general Command of *saying* or *singing* the Praises of God to *Singing* only;) But we find in Scripture several Sacred Hymns, particularly of *Mary*, the Blessed *Virgin*,

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*Virgin, Zacharias, and Simon, and the Saints in Heaven (Rev. vii. 12. and xi. 17.)* which are mention'd, to have been said by them respectively; and the Circumstances in the Story do not make it probable that they were Sung. From all which we may reasonably infer, That where People can sing, they are obliged to do it, in Obedience to God's Command: But where through any defect of Nature, or Art, they cannot sing decently, they may be dispenced with saying. Only People ought not by this Indulgence to be encouraged to neglect *singing* altogether, or to think that God doth not require it of them, when by a little Pains or Industry they may attain to the Art of decently performing it in his Services.

III. 'Tis certain the Word of God recommendeth to us Psalms and Hymns *in Prose*, for our Praising God. If we look into the Songs of the *Blessed Virgin, of Zacharias, or Simon*, we shall find them all in Prose, and such are the Songs of the *Blessed*, which they are represented singing in the *Revelations*, particularly Chap. V. 9. & Chap. XIV. 3. As to the Hebrew Psalms, 'tis evident that they are Poetical, but the Poetry of them consists rather in the Style and manner of Expression, than in any certain Measures, or Verses, which those that have searched most narrowly into them, have yet been able to discover, so as to satisfy an indifferent Reader. But whatever Poetry there may be in them we can not find by any of the ancient Translations which were made use of by the Church in our Saviour or his Apostles time, or in the Ages immediately following, that they or the first Christians did sing any thing in Verse; but we are sure that they sung Hymns in Prose: So that we have no certain Scriptural Warrant for the use of Verse or Metre in the Praises of God.

Perhaps some may fancy that Verse or Measure

was not in use in those Countreys, and that therefore they sung their Songs in Prose; but this is a Mistake: Poetry and Verses were then in those places, where the Psalms were Translated, in great Request; and at the highest Perfection, when the New Testament was penned; and yet we have no Example therein of their use in the Praises of God.

And it is very manifest that this proceeded from Choice, not Necessity: For if the holy Ghost had thought Verse necessary for Divine Psalms, we may presume he would have inspired some of the holy Men in Scripture, when Extraordinary Gifts were so common, either to Translate the Psalms of the Old Testament into Verse, or else to Compose some of the other Hymns that are recorded in the New, after that way: But neither of these having been done, 'tis at least a presumption that we may praise God as acceptably in Prose as in Verse.

And there is one thing further to be considered, That the Prophets of the Heathen, who pretended to be inspired, generally wrote their Prophecies and their Hymns to their Gods, in Verse: We know not but this may be one Reason, why the holy Ghost thought fit that such as were inspired by Him, should decline that way of Recording their Prophecies or Praises.

IV. As the Scriptures prescribe us the Use of Psalms in the Praises of God, so they encourage us to offer those Praises by way of Responses, or Answering: For this we have the best Examples that can be desired, even the blessed Angels and glorified Saints as *Sonisa VI. 3. And she cried unto another, Holy, Holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts.* And the Church triumphant through the whole Revelation is (I think) constantly represented praising God after this manner. So *Chap. VII. 9. where the Multitude, that represent all People, praise him with a loud voice,*

vers.

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(vers. 10.) *Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb.* And then, *The Angels and Elders,* who represent the Clergy, perform their part, *vers. 12.* saying, *Amen; Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and might, be unto our God.*

They are represented the same way answering one another, *Chap. XIX. 1.* *I heard a great Voice of much People in Heaven, saying, Alleluia;* this they repeat (*Vers. 3.*) then the *Twenty four Elders* (representing, as before, the Clergy) answer (*Vers. 4.*) *Amen, Alleluia.* Then (*Vers. 5.*) *a Voice came out of the Throne, saying, Praise our God.* Upon which (*Vers. 6.*) the People resume their part, and answer, *Alleluia: for the Lord Omnipotent Reigns.* I make no question but this is taken by Allusion from the manner of the Church's Praising God on Earth; and there is nothing in it but what is agreeable to St. Paul's Command, of *Teaching and Admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs;* which supposes every one to have a share in them, either by turns, or by bearing a part.

It is observable that the Psalm contain many excellent Instructions and Exhortations, as well as Praises and Prayers, and therefore St. Paul recommends them to Christians for their mutual Instruction and Admonition. It was common therefore for one to sing, and the rest to harken for their Instruction and Edification, as appears *1. Cor. XIV. 21.* *For ye may all Prophesie, one by one, that all may learn and be comforted.* Prophesying here (as we may find from the 26th Verse of this Chapter) includes Psalms, as well as Doctrines, Tongues, Revelations and Interpretations; and the praising God, *one by one,* or by turns, amounts to praising Him by way of Responses or Answering; and tho' these Prophets were inspired, yet it is plain they acted in this according to the settled Order of the Church, *Vers. 33.* *As in all the Churches*  
of



of the saints; and these inspired Prophets thus praising God *one by one*, is an unquestionable Precedent that God approves this way in his Praises.

This way of Praising God by answering one another, is the most ancient we find in Scripture. For thus *Miriam* praised God, *Exod. XV. 21.* And *Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath Triumphed gloriously, &c.* And the last Song recorded in Scripture is of the same sort, *Rev. XIX.* as is before mentioned.

I reckon the Songs with which the Women of *Israel* received *Saul*, *1. Sam. XVII. 7.* to be Religious, and there it is expressly said, That *they answered one another.* And *Chap. XXI. 1.* *Did they not sing one to another &c.* But whether these songs were Religious or no it is certain that the Frame and Composition of some Psalms are such, as plainly discover that they were designed to be sung in Parts; and as much is owned by the best Commentators: Such are the *XXIV.* and *CXVIII.* Psalms.

It is to be observed that the Law of *Moses* neither prescribes Psalms in the Praises of God, nor Singers, nor the way of Singing: These all therefore are parts of Natural Religion, and indeed Antienter than the Law, as appears by *Exod. xv.* What therefore we find in the Old Testament concerning these, is either from the immediate Prescriptions and Revelations of God by his Prophets, or from the Dictates of Nature, and not any part of the Ceremonial Law. And 'tis obvious that Natural necessity will teach any considering Man this way of alternate Singing or Answering in Parts, for if the Songs be long, as some of the Psalms are, no one Mans Voice can hold out to the end.

V. The holy Scriptures recommend to us the use of Instruments in the Praises of God; the Psalmist frequently uses and Recommends them, and the whole book of Psalms is concluded with this



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this Advice, *Psal. CL. 4. Praise him with the Timbrel and dance (the Margin reads and Pipe) praise him with stringed Instruments and Organs, &c.* Thus Religious persons were taught to praise God before the Law. *Ex. XV. 20. And Miriam the Prophetess the sister of Aaron, took a Timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after with Timbrels, &c.* And thus the Blessed in heaven are represented praising God. *Rev. V. 8. and XIV. 2.* The Writers of the new Testament, recommend to us the Psalms which were the Hymns of the Jewish Church and command us to sing them, and 'tis observable that the word we render *sing*, *Jam. V. 13.* originally implies *singing with an Instrument*. Now if they had not approved the Jewish way of singing them, which was with Instruments, they would not have us'd a word that importeth it; nay it is not to be doubted but they would have cautioned us against it, but the use of Instruments (as I have shew'd before in the case of *Miriam*) being no part of the Ceremonial Law, but antecedent to it, ought not to cease without some command or precept condemning it.

VI. Lastly, The Scripture requires that we understand the Praises we sing to God; and this Warrants our Translating them into the Vulgar Tongue. It is a Duty therefore incumbent on the Governours of the Church, to procure the Psalms to be Translated for the Use of the People under their Charge, and they may expect the assistance of God's Spirit when they attempt it, in obedience to his Command. But if through Humane Frailty, any Mistake, not contrary to Faith, should creep in; this ought to be no Exception against the Use of the Translation, since there are such Mistakes both in the Syriac, Greek, and Latin Translations, some of which are of great Antiquity, and were us'd by our Saviour himself and his Apostles.

These are the Directions the Scriptures give us for the

the Performance of this first part of the Worship of God; which consists in *Praises*, and the manner we find them offer'd to Him by his Saints.

SECT. 2.

*The manner of Praising God Publickly, which is Prescribed and Practised by our Church.*

**N**OW as to the manner of offering *Praises* in our Church, it is to be considered,

1. That we are directed to praise, glorify and confess to God every day, in a certain number of *Psalms* of his own Appointment, out of the *Old Testament*; and then in such *Hymns* as are recorded in the *New*: And to these there are added such other *Hymns*, *Confessions of Faith* and *Thanksgivings*, as will appear upon due examination to be agreeable to the general *Directions of Scripture*.

But inasmuch as the *Mystery of the holy Trinity* is more explicitly revealed to us under the *Gospel*, than it was to those under the *Law*; Therefore our Church has thought fit to require us with every *Psalms* and *Hymn* to intermix, *Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the holy Ghost*; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: To signify that we believe that the same God was worshipped by them as by us, the same God that is glorified in the *Psalms*, having been from the beginning *Father, Son, and holy Ghost*, as well as now: So that our ascribing this glory expressly to the *Three Persons* in whose Name we are Baptised, ought not to be taxed as any real Addition to the *Psalms*, it being only such a necessary Expedient to turn the *Jewish Psalms* into *Christian Hymns*, and to fit them for the Use of the Church now, as they were before for the Use of the

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Synagogue; which practice I presume can give cause of Exception to none but *Socinians*.

2. Our Church Orders these Psalms to be either *Sung or Said*, as the people are able to offer them; not being willing to lay a greater restraint on them than the Scripture has done. In which (as I have already shewed) we have Examples for both these ways of praising God.

3. They are proposed to us in Prose, without any other alteration from the Original than what was necessary to make them intelligible in our Language.

4. The people are allowed to bear their part in them, and either to sing, or say them by way of Answering: This is according to the Scripture Examples, but it is not imposed, except in very few Cases.

5. Our Church permiteth the Use of some grave Musical Instruments to regulate the Voices of those that sing, and to stir up their Affections, which are the Natural Effects of Musick, and seem more requisite in Northren Countreys, where generally peoples Voices are more harsh and untuneable than in other places; but this is not imposed in any Congregation, nor doth any Rule of our Church require it, and therefore it is at the peoples Choice, whether they will use the help of these Instruments, or no.

6. This then is the care our Church has taken, for the publick performance of the praises of God, and if we bring Grace in our hearts, and an inward sense of the Majesty of God, and of his Mercies towards us, when we come to joyn in them, which is our part and duty to do, who can say that God's praises thus Celebrated, are not according to his Commands, and acceptable to Him? I think it sufficiently plain, that they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, which ought to be  
our

our Rule for this, and all other parts of God's Worship.

I think so more necessary therefore on this Head, but with all earnestness, to beseech you, who are of our Communion, to consider how great and important a part these praises are of the Worship of God, and to apply your selves with all diligence, and holy zeal, to the performance of it; for we never come nearer the Imployment of the Blessed, then when our Hearts and Mouths are filled with the praises of our God.

### SECT. 3.

#### *The Dissenters manner of Praising God in Publick.*

**A**ND now, as to you my Friends, and Brethren who dissent from this Worship of ours, give me leave with all calmness to examine how you perform this great work of Praising God; And I desire you to compare your own practice in your Publick Assemblies, with what you find in your Bibles concerning this Duty.

I. Your Directory determines it to be *the Duty of Christians to praise God publicly, by singing of Psalms together in the Congregation*, and that in singing Psalms the voice is to be tuneable and gravely ordered, and lastly, that it is convenient that the Minister, or some other fit person appointed by him, and the other Ruling Officers, do read the Psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof; And your common practice is to sing two or three verses of a Psalm in Meetre, the Minister, or Clerk, first reading each line, and the people singing it after.

II. Before I proceed to make any Observations on these Rules and Practice, to prevent mistakes, I desire you to observe,

1. That I do not condemn the singing of Psalms in Meetre, as unlawful.

2. That

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2. That I take it for granted that the Apostles and Primitive Christians did praise God in Prose, and that Metre and Rhyme are, for ought appears, purely of Humane Invention.

3. We must consider that if we take the *Psalms* (as we use them) in *Prose*, there is not a more Exalted piece of Poetry in the World, nor any thing better fitted to raise in serious and Well-disposed people the most devout Affections. Whereas, if we take them as they are commonly used in *Rhyme*, the Force, the Vigour, the Loftiness which are so Extraordinary in the Prose Translation, are almost intirely lost in the Verse, and tho' several have attempted to Translate them into English Verse, yet I cannot find that any one has done Justice to the Majesty of the Expressions, and hardly to the Sense of them.

III. Having premised these things, I intreat you to consider impartially with me how far this your practice agrees with the Scripture Rule.

1. Then the Scriptures Command us to praise God in *Psalms*, and undoubtedly the first Christians used whole *Psalms* at a time. Sometimes they joyned together in singing them, as our Saviour and his Disciples did, *Matr. xxvi. 30.* Sometimes one only sung, and the rest attended for their Edification, as appears from *1 Cor. xiv. 26.* But the aforesaid method of singing the Metre *Psalms* takes up so much time, that it is impossible to praise God in whole *Psalms* after that manner. But if we use the *Psalms* in prose, according to the Order of our Church, the Experience of Good Men both testify that we may easily pass through them in a Month, with seriousness and attention, whether we sing or read them. And to Well-disposed minds no part of God's Service is more agreeable or Edifying. Whereas some years would not serve to that purpose, if we should use the new Invented way of

of singing a few verses. And I question whether all of them were ever yet sung through in one Meeting place, perhaps not in all the Meetings of the Kingdom, and yet it must be confessed that every one of them was left to the Church by the Holy Ghost for that use, and is profitable, when thus used, for Doctrine, Reproof, Correction, Instruction and Comfort. Which plainly proves that the singing the Psalms in Meetre, is not the Scripture way of using them.

2. Let me mind you, that in the time of the late Usurpation, Dr. *Manton*, a Man of considerable Reputation among the Dissenters, observes in his Comment, on the Epistle of St. *James*, Chap. v. ver. 13, That several scrupled singing Psalms at all; others objected against singing them in verse; this he calleth a *vain cavil*, yet proposeth, *if the scruple continueth, that such may sing the Reading Psalms, as hath been used in Cathedrals*, and vouches St. *Austin*, and *Arbansus* for it; which is a plain Confession from this considerable Person, that this way of singing is less liable to exception, then yours.

3. I know it is alledged that we ought to have the Psalms in *Verse for singing*, as well as we ought to have them in *Prose for Reading*. But I have shewed already that Christ and his Disciples sung their Hymns in Prose; and I desire you to consider whether it be necessary to vary from these Precedents. We have a Command to Translate them (which supposes into Prose, because the Original is so) but none to turn them into Meetre, which necessarily requires Paraphrasing, Changing the order of the Sentences, sometimes adding and leaving out words; And on that account seems to give Human Wit too great a Liberty of treating the Word of God as Men please: At least we must acknowledge that the Psalms so ordered partake of Human Frailty, and are hardly equal to the best meer



Sect. 3. *How practised by Dissenters.* 17

meer Human Composures. When therefore we use such Psalms, we ought to use them as Human Composures only, and not as God's Word: And thus they are used by our people in our Assemblies, not as any main substantial part of the Worship of God, but rather as a voluntary entertainment of Devotion, and a refreshment to the people between the parts of the Service; much less are they allowed by us to juggle out the Psalms and Hymns appointed by God.

4. As to the manner of singing the Psalms in Metre, at present in use, both with you and us, in some places, that is, the Minister or Clerks reading a line, and the people singing it after, it is a great interruption to the Musick, and to the understanding of the Psalm, by breaking the sense of it, and in that respect very inconvenient, and is likewise a late invention of our own, never used by any Foreign Church, either Popish or Reformed, for ought I can find, to this day; and has been taken up to supply the negligence and laziness of people, who will not now, as formerly, be at pains to get Psalms by heart, or so much as procure Books, or learn to read them.

5. Notwithstanding your Directory requires the voice in singing Psalms to be tuneable and gravely ordered, yet you have not only refused the Use of *Musical Instruments* (which are a natural means to help the Voice, and make it tuneable, and are used by most of the Reformed Churches in *Europe*) but have also determined it to be Unlawful.

I would intreat you to consider, that though perhaps it may not be so proper to press the Use of Instruments in the Service of God, in these parts, where so many, for want of being used to them, have entertained prejudices against them and some are incapable of being affected by them; yet the making them Unlawful, is against Nature and Scripture, and



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is on that account a dangerous Superstition, and Encroachment on Christian Liberty.

6. The same Superstition and Encroachment it is, not only to forbear to praise God in singing or saying Psalms and Hymns by way of Responses or Answering (of which I have given such Noble Precedents out of Scripture) but even to determine it to be Unlawful.

Lastly, I would entreat you to consider, That forasmuch as appears, you have altogether laid aside the Psalms in Prose, and the other Scripture Hymns, that are of God's immediate Appointment, and for the Use of which we have the Example of our Saviour and his Saints, insomuch that they are no where used by you in the Praises of God; but in their stead you have substituted, as is before observed, a few Verses of a Psalm of Human Composure, without Scripture-Example or Precedent, and sing them in a way that has nothing of Antient Practice, much less Scripture for it, but is purely and immediately an *Invention of Men*.

IV. The Case then between our Church and you, in this point, I think impartially stands thus: Our Church praises God every day with five or six Psalms, besides other Hymns, of His own Appointment, and in His own Words and Method, and yet is deserted and condemned by you in this very point, as *Teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*; whereas you, who only praise Him in a piece of a Psalm of a few Verses, and in a Method of your own finding out, perswade your selves that you keep the Ordinances of God pure and unmixed from *Human Invention*.

This is a thing seriously to be considered by you; for as it is easie to think what all unprejudiced Men will judge of it now, so we may conclude what God will judge of it at the Last Day. If you in earnest lay these things to heart, and reflect on them, I perswade

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Iwade my self that they will at least prevail with you to be modest in your Censures of us your Brethren; and prevent your Judging, much less Condemning us, or our manner of Praising God, as Unacceptable to Him.

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C H A P. II.

*Of Prayer.*

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Sect. 1.

*What the Holy Scriptures prescribe concerning it.*

**L**ET us now proceed to the second main part of the Worship of God, in the Public Meetings of Christians, which I observed was *Prayer or Supplication*.

And if we consider what Rules, Directions, and Examples the Scriptures afford us for the performance of this Duty, we shall find,

*That they direct us to offer up our Prayers in a set and prepared Form of Words.* That we may more clearly judge of this matter, it will be fit to consider the several parts of prayer distinctly by themselves; such as *Confession, Supplication, Intercession, &c.*

1. *Confession* of our own Unworthiness, and of God's Mercy, to aggravate it, is commonly looked on as the first part of *Prayer*, and proper to intro-

duce our *Supplications*. Now in *searching the Scriptures* we shall find expresse Command to use a set Form of Words in both these sorts of Confession. So *Deut. xvi. 3.* *Thou shalt go unto the Priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the Countrey which the Lord swore unto our fore-Fathers to give us.* And then the Offerer was to make his Confession, (*vers. 5*) *And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my Father, &c.* Here we have a Form of Confession of the Person's Unworthiness, and of God's Goodness and Mercy, together with a Profession of Obedience and Dependence on Him, prescribed by God Himself in set and prepared Words.

The same appears from Solomon's prescribing a Form of Confession for the penitent *Israelites*, *1 Kings viii. 47.* which words we find accordingly applied in *Psal. cvi. 6.* and made part of a larger Form of Confession, to be used in their Captivity (as Solomon designed them) which appears from the 47th verse of the same Psalm (taken from the Form prescribed by David, *1 Chron. xvi. 35.*) And *Daniel*, in his Form of Confession in Captivity, (*Chap. ix. vers. 5.*) uses the same Form of Words: From whence it appears that they were not left Arbitrarily to Choice, or Discretion, tho' other Words might be joined with them, when there was occasion to enlarge or vary the Form.

Many of the *Psalms* are Forms of Confession, and were used and daily Repeated by the *Jewish Church*. *Psal. li.* was the Form of Confession David prepared and used, for his Murther and Adultery; and he not only used it himself, but directed it to the Master of his Choire, to be used in the Publick Service, as appears from the Title of it. *Psal. lxxviii.* is a general Confession for the whole people, setting forth at large the Mercies of God to them, and their In-

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gratitude, Disobedience and Rebellion ; and this not as a Pattern, but as a *set* and prepared *Form*, to be used in their publick Service : All which shew us that Addresses to God in such *Forms*, are of Divine Institution, and are a warrant to us that he approves that our Confession should be made to him in that manner.

2. The second part of Prayer is Supplication for good things ; and in this Case we have likewise the Commandment of God for a *Form* of Words, *Deut. xxvi. 13, 15. Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, Look down from thy Holy Habitation, from Heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the Land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our Fathers, &c.* So *Hos. xiv. 2. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord your God, and say unto Him, Take away all Iniquity, &c.* Moses in the Wilderness used a *set Form* of Words to this purpose, and recommended it to be used by the Church of God for ever, as is manifest from *Psal. xc.* which has this Title, *A Prayer of Moses the Man of God.* When such a person, by the Inspiration of the *Holy Ghost*, used, and left to be used by us in our Supplications, such a *set* and prepared *Form* of Words, we ought not to doubt but that manner of Address is acceptable to God.

3. The third part of Prayer is Intercession in the behalf of others : Now Blessing is an Eminent sort of Intercession, and for the use of a *set Form* of Words in this, we have likewise the Command of God, *Numb. vi. 23, On this wise ye shall bless the Children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee, &c.* Here we have not only a Blessing, but an earnest Intercession with God for his People, and the *Form* and *Words* prescribed by Himself, which were not to be used by mean, ignorant people ( who are only now supposed by some to need the help of *Forms* ) but by *Aaron* and his Sons, the Chief Priests



From which we may be assured, That God approves that manner of Address in our Blessings and Intercessions for one another, not only from mean people, but from the greatest.

4. The fourth part of Prayer consisteth in Petitions, for the averting evil, commonly called Deprecation; and for this purpose, we have several *Forms* prescribed by God, *Joel* i. 14. *Gather the Elders and all the Inhabitants of the Land into the House of the Lord your God, and say unto the Lord, Alas, for the day, the day of the Lord is at hand, &c.* We have God's Commandment for another *Form*, *Joel* ii. 17. *Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, &c.* From whence it clearly follows, that God approves the use of a *Form* in this part of Prayer, tho' commonly the most earnest and importunate, and such as seems least to admit of being bounded by a *Form*, so that we have the Approbation and Commandment of God for the use of a *set Form* of Words, in all the parts of Prayer.

II. And accordingly we find Holy Men of God, tho' full of Wisdom and of his Spirit, using the same *set Form* of Prayer always on the same occasion. Thus the Scriptures inform us concerning *Moses*, *Num.* x. 35. *When the Ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine Enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord to the many Thousands of Israel.* From whence it appears that God approves the use of one *set constant Form* of Words, in our Prayers, as long as the occasion of repeating them is the same; for I presume none will suspect it was for want of Words, or of the Spirit of Prayer, that *Moses* confined himself to this *Form*.

I shall add further, that the whole Book of *Psalms* is a Collection of Prayers of all sorts: And there are few



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few of them but what are most Excellent *Forms of Prayer*, expressed in such pathetick, significant and moving words, that we have great reason to thank God for furnishing us with them, and which we can never hope to equal by any of our own Invention, such are the 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, &c. On this account they were used by the *Jews* as the constant Service and Liturgy performed in their Temple, as we may gather from what I formerly quoted, 2 *Chr.* xxix. 30.

III. But perhaps some may think these Commands and Examples of set *Forms of Prayer* not to be a sufficient Warrant to Christians, because they are taken out of the Old Testament, before the Spirit was poured out in so plentiful a measure, as under the Gospel. I shall therefore proceed to examine the Commands and Examples of the New Testament, and here,

1. I think it is certain that our Saviour and his Apostles prayed by a *Form*, for they joyned in the Worship of the Temple and Synagogues, which consisted in Psalms, as I have already shewed, and in some certain *Forms of Prayers* added to them, and constantly used in their daily Service, as we learn from those that give an Account of the Jewish Worship at that \* time. Now

our Saviour and his Apostles being frequently present at their Service, both in the Temple and Synagogues, 'tis manifest they approved the manner of Addressing themselves to God in a set *Form of Words*.

\* *Much to this purpose might be urged out of the Rabbins, but the Author thinks it fit to confine himself to Scripture.*

2. But our Saviour has put this matter out of all dispute with Impartial Men, by prescribing a *Form* to his Disciples, when they desired him to Teach them to pray as *John* Taught his Disciples. For we find

his way of Teaching them was not by directing them to wait for the Impulses of the Spirit, and immediate Inspiration from God of what they were to Offer up to him; We do not find him saying, *When ye pray, speak what shall then come into your minds, or what shall be given you in that hour without taking thought about what they should say*; as He did in another case, that is, when they should be brought before Governours and Kings for his sake, *Mat. x. 19*. But in addressing themselves to God, he prescribed them a *Form of Words*, and Commanded them to use it, *Luke xi. 2*. And he said unto them, *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.* Here is an expresse Command of Christ to his Disciples to use these Words when they pray, *Our Father, &c.* A Command for the use of a *Form*, so plain, that it is impossible to expresse it in clearer terms.

'Tis not to be doubted, but Religious Persons among the *Jews* offer'd up constantly Prayers to God. We see it in *David*, *Psal. lv. 17*. and in *Dan. Chap. vi. 10*. And no doubt the Disciples of our Saviour were not wanting in this Duty, nor in skill to perform it, since we find that other devout Persons of their time had their *Hours of Prayer*, as we see in *Acts iii. 1*. Therefore what they desired of our Saviour, was not to teach them absolutely, or in general, to pray, but to Teach them to Pray as *John* also Taught his Disciples; that is, to give them a *Form of Prayer* proper to *His Institution*, as they saw the Disciples of *Moses* and *John* had proper to *Theirs*: Upon which our Saviour gave them the *Lord's-Prayer*, as a summary of the main points of his Doctrine, and as a constant badge of their being his Disciples; As if he should have said, *When ever you offer up to God your usual Prayers, which Religious Custom has taught you, as Jews and Disciples of Moses, or of John, whether in Secret or Publick, add this always to your other Prayers, for a continual Remembrance*

to you of those Duties, Priviledges and Qualifications which belong to you as My Disciples, and as a means of obtaining Grace from your Heavenly Father, to enable you to persevere in them. The Lord's-Prayer is therefore a Badge of our Profession imposed by Christ himself, and to be used by Us, as we would be accounted His Disciples.

Neither will saying the Substance of it in other Words of our own *Invention*, answer the intent of this Command, if we lay aside the use of this *Form of Prayer*: Since,

1. We are sure the Substance of the Prayer is put by Christ in the most apposite and comprehensive Words that are possible, and therefore wholly to lay them aside for others, is plainly to decline the choice of Words that Christ has made for us, & substitute less apposite of our own, to express those Petitions in.

2. The more particularly any thing is Commanded in the Worship of God, we ought to be the more careful to observe it, and may be the more confident that God is pleased with our performance of it: since therefore we are particularly Commanded, when we pray, to say, *Our Father, &c.* whatever other prayers we offer to God, this ought not to be omitted.

3. In general we are Commanded to offer up our desires to God, and in particular to offer this Prayer. These Commands agree very well together, and therefore the one ought not to juggle out the other: To lay aside the Prayer particularly commanded by Christ, for others of our own composing, in pursuance of the general Command, is too apparently to prefer our own *Invention* to God's Command.

4. When we take the liberty to word our own Prayers, we may forget some things, we may mix our own frailties and weakness in our Petitions; and this too often appears both in the matter and wording of them: The way therefore to supply these defects,

defects, and to obtain pardon for our Infirmities, is to use our Lords perfect Prayer, not only as a Pattern for prayer (as some would have it) but likewise as a Form necessary to be used, to correct what may be amiss, or defective, in our own prayers.

5. They who lay aside the words of the Lord's Prayer, are in danger to lay aside some of the substance of it also; particularly the substance of that Petition, *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us*: For many who lay aside the Lord's Prayer, do neither in terms nor substance offer this Petition to God; nay, are so far from making this the Condition of their pardon, as Christ has taught us, that they publicly dispute against the Form for this very reason: Tho' Christ, who fore-saw the Objection which our Corruptions would be apt to make, has Answered it, and bound it upon us indispensibly as our Duty. to ask Forgiveness on these and no other terms, *Matth. vi. 15.* And indeed if such a Sentence had been prescribed by our Lord to be only repeated by Christians once or oftner every day, it would have seem'd but what was necessary to mind them of that peculiar and indispensable Duty of their Profession. We see the Wisdom of the Antients thought fit to reduce their Doctrine or Instructions into Proverbs, or short Sentences to be got by heart, and kept continually in memory as of great influence, for guiding Mens Lives and Actions; and such Sentences must be of much greater influence, when repeated in the presence of God, as these in our Lord's Prayer are required to be.

Lastly, This Prayer being given us as a Badge of our *Profession*, a Summary of our Duty as Christians, and a Form of Sound Words, it is no more lawful to alter it, than to lay it aside; and it would be the same presumption and hazard to substitute other words instead of Christ's, in this Prayer, which we are oblig'd always to use when we pray, as to change  
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is the words of our Creed; or as it would be in a Battle to change the Word given by a General, or any part of it, and to retain only the signification of it. From all which 'tis manifest that God has required Forms of Prayer to be used by us, both in the Old and New Testament.

As to the difference we find in the Lord's Prayer as delivered by St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, 'tis to be observed that our Saviour spake in the Syriac or vulgar Hebrew, and the Evangelists wrote their Gospels in Greek: Now in the Syriac, one and the same word expresses both those different words which the Evangelists use in the same Petition, as *Debts* and *Trespases*, &c. So that it is no real, but a seeming difference between them; all the different Words being the same in the *Original Language* in which our Saviour spake.

IV. As we have the Command of God, and the Example of his Saints, for offering up our prayers to Him, in a *set* and prepared *Form of Words*, so we have the like Example for *joyning Voices*, upon occasion, in offering these Words. Generally it is sufficient that the People joyn in their hearts with the words of publick Prayers, yet the Scriptures Warrant also, on some Occasions, *their joyning their Voices*.

1. Thus we find the people of *Israel* addressing themselves to God, *Judg. xxi. 2. And the people came to the House of God, and abode there till Even, before God, and lift up their Voices, and wept sore, and said, O Lord God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel? &c.*

2. In *Hymns* and *Psalms* (which are also *Prayers* in great part, as I noted before) the people are generally allowed by all (as being fully Warranted by Scripture) to *joyn their Voices*. So *Moses* and the Children of *Israel* sung unto the Lord, *Exod. xv. 1.*

3. In the New Testament we have an Eminent Example of this practice, *Acts iv. 24.* where the Apostles

Apostles and their Disciples, *lift up their Voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord thou art God, &c.* If this prayer was immediately inspired, as it seems it was, then the whole Assembly was inspired together, not only to think the same Thing, but likewise to utter the same Words; and the Spirit of God by it has attested the fitness and decency of a whole Congregation's pronouncing the same prayer together. If it had not been convenient that this should be sometimes practised in our Christian Assemblies, God would not have given us this Example. If the people were always to joyn in their hearts only with our publick prayers, it would have been so here, for the Spirit of God wou'd not have led them to do an indecent thing, or a thing unfit for God's Worship.

4. St. Paul and Silas joyned also their Voices in their prayers, as we may see from *Acts xvi. 25. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sung praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them*: I know it may be alledged, That they sung their prayers which they offered up to God on this Occasion, and on that account *joyned their Voices*; I confess the Original favours this Inference; but if it be allowed that the Apostles sung their prayers together, it must be allowed that they might likewise Say them together: For we find the Blessed in Heaven offering, not only their Praises together, but their Prayers also; so *Rev. vi. 10. They cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not Judge and Avenge our Blood, &c.* From all which it is manifest, that we are warranted by the Examples of God's people, both in the Old and New Testament, to joyn our Voices, as well as our Hearss, in some of our publick Supplications to God; and that this practice is no *New Invention of Men*.

V. If we consult the Scripture, we shall find that it is the *Priest's* part to make publick Intercession for the



the people, but yet so, that the people ought to bear a part by themselves, and answer in the Service, which we commonly call *Responses*

1. They are commanded to do it, *Psal. cvi. 48.* where after the Prayers and Praises of which the Psalm consists, are ended; it is added, *Let all the people say, Amen, praise the Lord:* and accordingly we find *1 Chr. xvi. 36.* That the People said Amen, and praised the Lord. And this is more signally observable in that solemn Service at the Dedication of Solomon's Temple, where we find First the Priests and Levites praising God, *2 Chron. v. 13.* and saying, *For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever;* the usual Form of Praising so often repeated in the Psalms, particularly in the *cxxxvi.* which was probably used at that time. Then Solomon, who built the Temple, performed another part of the Service, *Chap. vi. 3.* First, He blessed the People; Secondly, He blessed and thanked God for his Mercy, and Lastly, offer'd that Divine Prayer of Dedication, which we find in that Chapter; Then follow the burnt Offerings and Sacrifices, which were peculiarly the Priest's share of the Service, *Chap. vii.* And God gives his Approbation of their Praises, Prayers and Offerings, by sending down Fire from Heaven to consume their Sacrifices: And then last of all follows the people's part which they perform, *Chap. vii. 3.* *They bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying, He is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever.* This Service was Ordered by the Spirit of God, and plainly shews us that He approved of the people's having a share or part peculiar to themselves in his Worship.

2. If it be said that this was the way of Worshipping God under the Law, which is now Abolished and Unlawful, as well as the other Levitical Ceremonies: The Apostles have answer'd this, by continuing this practice

practice in the Christian Church; and by admitting the people to bear a part in the Publick Service, and to answer to the prayers, have assured us that there is no Legal Abolished Ceremony. This is manifest from 1 Cor. xiv. 16. *Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks?* which shews that even the unlearned had a part assigned them in the Christian Assemblies. It may be added to this (what I observed before, Chap. 1. Sect. 1. N. 4.) of the Responses in praising God, and of the Worship described in the Revelations, where the Angels and Elders representing the Clergy, and the Multitude representing the People, bear each of them their distinct parts; in allusion to what was done in the Christian Assemblies. And this is a clear proof, that the people bare a part, and answered to the Blessings and Prayers of him that Officiated ever since the Christian Worship was Established.

### Sect. 2.

#### *The Rules and Practice of Our Church concerning Prayer.*

**H**AVING thus seen the Directions and Examples which the Scriptures afford us for the publick performance of our Prayers to God, let us now consider the Worship of our Church, and compare it with Them; both as to the Words and Matter of Our Prayers: And to the comfort of us, who are of this Communion; it will clearly appear,

1. That there is not one thing we ask of God in them, which he has not particularly directed us to ask, or any thing for which we ought to pray, that is omitted. This Advantage we have towards the proof of this point, that our Prayers are fixed and

stated

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stated, and may be examined by all that have a mind to be satisfied in them. An Advantage we gain by putting them into a set and prepared Form of Words, according to the Commands of God, and the Examples of Holy Men; whereas 'tis impossible for such as use only *Extempore prayer*, thus to justify their Service, because their *Prayers* are altogether uncertain, and depend on the present thoughts of the Speaker.

2. Our Church requires the People to *joyn their Voices* with the Minister in some of the *Prayers*, in which they are more particularly concerned, and which seem of the most general and greatest moment. Such are the general *Confessions of Sin*, and the *Lord's-Prayer*.

3. Our Church has assigned for the People some short *Answers or Responses* to our prayers, whereby they may be stirred up to attention, and signify their concurrence with the Minister. Thus to every prayer and blessing they are obliged to answer *Amen*, as we find the people did in the Church of *Corinth*; and to *joyn Unanimously* in some other short Ejaculations to implore God's Mercy, or beseech him to *hear us*. In all which I have already shewed we have the warrant of Scripture; and it is plain to any one that will be at the pains to consider our Service, that we have taken the Rules thereof from Scripture, and have not invented a Service out of our own Heads; and then (as is too often the Custom of *Innovators*) endeavoured to make the Scripture comply with it. The first Reformers of Our Church would never have retain'd and prepared *Forms of Prayers*; had they not found such in Scripture: they would never have required the people to *joyn their voices* in some prayers, and answer to others, if the Examples of Scripture had not led them to it. They professed, and their design was to make the Word of God their Rule; and we see

see how exactly they conformed to it in these particulars. I wish I could say as much for all other ways of Worship among Protestants.

### SECT. 3.

*The practice of those who differ from Us.*

I. **A**ND here I must intreat you of my Diocess, who dissent from Our Worship, seriously to consider with me, what it is which you have substituted in the place of these things which you have intirely laid aside, tho' so expressly directed and warranted by Scripture; and examine whether your way have a solid Foundation in God's Word. I shall endeavour to represent it with all fairness and impartiality, and leave you to judge as God shall direct you, and as you will answer it at the last day.

And here I find that some of your Writers ~~of~~ of Opinion, *That the Spirit of prayer is given to all the Children of God in some measure, for enabling their Hearts to conceive, and their Tongues to express convenient desires to God;* and that therefore *Forms of Prayer* are of no necessary use, either in *Publick* or *Private*; on the contrary, that they stint the Spirit, and hinder Men from stirring up or using the gift that God has given them.

2. Others of you go further, and affirm that all *Forms of Prayer* are unlawful to Christians, and that therefore it is a sin to *joyn* in a Worship where they are used, or to be present at it.

3. That the Minister is the mouth of the Congregation, and that he only is to speak publickly to God in the behalf of the people, and that they are not to *joyn their voices*, but their Hearts only with him.

Upon these Principles you forsake our Worship, and many of you think it is a sin to be so much as present

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present at our Religious Assemblies : It is of great importance, therefore that you should understand what the Scriptures determine in this matter ; for if our Worship ( which you thus forsake ) be plainly enjoyned by Scripture ( as I think I have made it sufficiently appear ; ) and these principles of your Worship, and your Practice pursuant to them, have no Foundation in Scripture ; I cannot see how you can answer your forsaking Our Assemblies, to God and your own Consciences. Let us then consider each of these Principles apart.

II. And first, for that position of your *Directory*, That the Spirit of Prayer is given to all the Children of God in some measure, for enabling their Hearts to conceive, and their Tongues to express convenient desires to

*Directions concerning secret and private Worship.*  
Art. ix.


God : I intreat you to consider what Promise or Foundation it has in Scripture. I profess to you seriously, That upon the strictest Enquiry I could make, I never could find any such promise made to all the Children of God, in the Old or New Testament ; neither did I ever meet any Dissenter that was able to shew any such promise to furnish us with words in Prayer, without the use of set and premeditated Forms. If then there be none such, as we may be well assured there is not, was it not too much presumption in the Compilers of your *Directory*, to obtrude this Doctrine on the World, or persuade People to depend on it, and neglect the help of Forms, which the Scripture prescribes, and recommends to us ? Nay, as there is no Promise for such Extraordinary Assistance to all the Children of God to conceive prayer, so neither is there any Command in Scripture, requiring us to Worship or Pray to God in a conceiv'd extemporary or unpremeditated Prayer ; or so much as an Example in a settled ordinary Congregation where it was practised. If then you can shew none

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of these in the *Holy Scriptures*, neither Promise nor Command, 'tisa plain case, that this Doctrine is a meer *Invention of Men*. If my design were only to confute an Adversary, what I have already said were sufficient; but this *Spirit of Prayer* is a point of such Consequence, that I hope it will be both grateful and instructive to the Readers of all sorts, to explain it to them, and set it in as clear a light as I can; which I shall do under the following Heads.

III. 1. First therefore I doubt not but it will be granted, That whoever prayeth to God with *Faith, Sincerity, Fervency, Love, Humility, Conformity to God's will, Understanding, and decency of Expression*, prays acceptably to Him, and is endowed with the *Spirit of Prayer*; and whoever prays without these, does want it.

2. I suppose no man of himself can attain these Graces that are requisite to make our prayers acceptable, and that therefore we must have the Assistance of God's *Spirit* to beget them in us.

3. I suppose that it is possible for a man to acquire, by natural means, an ability to express himself decently *in prayer*, tho' he cannot so acquire Faith, or any other inward Grace; so that *Decency of Expression* is the lowest part of the *Gift of Prayer*, and not always a part of it.

4. I say that one *praying* by a *Form* may have all these Qualifications, and therefore his prayer may be acceptable to God, and proceed from his *Spirit*.

This may be proved to the Dissenters, 1. From the *Assembly's Larger Catechism*, which acknowledges it: For when the Question is put, *How is the Lord's Prayer to be used?* The Answer is, *The Lord's Prayer is not only for Direction, as a pattern according to which we are to make other prayers, but may be also used as a prayer, so that it be done with Understanding, Faith, Reverence, and other Graces, necessary to the right performance of the Duty of prayer.* 2. Many of the Psalms

are

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are ( as I observed before ) *Forms of Prayer*, and the Dissenters make no scruple to turn these *Forms of Prayers* into Meetre, and then sing them Line by Line after the Minister. As for Example : The first Verse of the fifth Psalm, runs thus, In the Translation they use :

*Give ear unto my words, O Lord,  
My Meditations weigh ;  
Hear my loud cry, my King, my God :  
For I to thee will pray.*

This is as much a *Form of Prayer*, as any in the *Litany*, and by their using it as they do, they plainly practice *praying by a Form* ; And do further also allow that *prayers*, as well as *praises*, may be offered to God with *singing*, and that they may repeat their *Forms of prayer* after the Minister. With what reason then can it be said against us, That a *Form of Prayer* sung in *Verse*, and after the Minister's Reading it, is Commendable ; but the same said or sung in *Prose*, is unlawful ?

5. Extemporary conceived *prayers* may want these *spiritual* qualifications of *prayer*, as I believe will not be denied by those that contend most for them, and they often are manifestly deficient ; being sometimes performed without Reverence or Decency of Expression, and by some even *without Understanding* ; and where these qualifications are found, others may be wanting. The Scriptures observe, That a man may make long *prayers*, and yet have a mind dispos'd to devour *Widows Houses*. He may want *Faith*, *Humility*, *Fervency* and *Affiance* in God, and yet be able to *pray without a Form* : And therefore such *prayers* are not always acceptable to God.

6. Therefore when God promises the *Spirit of Grace* and of *supplications* to his people, *Zach. xii. 10.* this Promise doth not extend to enable all men who are God's Children, to conceive with Hearts, their and express

with their Mouths convenient Desires, without a Form: for as I shewed before, every one to whom God gives a Heart and Disposition to pray, has the *Spirit of Prayer*, and he who from this principle offers up his desires to God in a Form, prays acceptably; and he that offers them without that principle, tho' he do it in unpremeditated and extemporary words, is rejected, and therefore the *Spirit of Prayer* is the grace, the heart, the disposition and ability to pray, and whether it be with, or without a Form, such a Man's prayers are acceptable to God; and 'tis greatly superstitious to think, or teach otherwise. If God gives us a Heart to pray, and by his providence hath provided us a Form to express our Desires in, or enables us to make one, 'tis sufficient, and we ought to be thankful.

7. In confirmation of this Account of the *Spirit of Prayer*, we may further observe,

1. That no worship is acceptable to God, that is not offer'd to Him in *Spirit and Truth*, John iv. 24. and therefore the Scripture recommends to us *Prayers* in and by the *Spirit*; but that *praying with the Spirit*, doth not signify Extemporary Unpremeditated Prayers, or Exclude Forms, will appear from 1 Cor. xiv. 15. *I will pray with the Spirit, I will pray with the Understanding, I will sing with the Spirit, I will sing with the Understanding also*: Here we find *singing with the Spirit*, as well as *praying with it*; and whoever sings otherwise, doth not worship God as he ought; but tho' we are obliged to sing with the *Spirit*, yet we must and ought to sing in the Congregation, with a set Form of Words, and therefore for the same reason, tho' we pray with the *Spirit*, we may pray by a set and prepared Form of Words: The most spiritual Songs consist of a set Form of imposed Words, and so may the most spiritual Prayers. Praying therefore with the *Spirit* in this place, is so far from meaning, or being an Argument for the Use of extemporary

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rary unpremeditated *Prayers*, that it is rather an Argument against them: For either we are obliged by it to sing to God in extemporary Hymns, or we are not obliged to *Pray* to Him in extemporary *Prayers*; since it is Unreasonable to interpret *singing with the Spirit*, in one sense, and *praying with the Spirit* in a contrary.

2. And to confirm this further, we find the most spiritual Persons addressing themselves to God in *Forms*; so did *Moses*, so did *David*, as I observed before; and so did our *Saviour* himself on the Cross, when in his *Agony* he repeated the first Verse of *Psal.* xxii. in *Syriack*, and as some believe, the whole *Psal.*; by which Act, He recommendeth to us *Forms of prayer* in his Dying Breath, as the most proper means of expressing our condition to God, and as most suitable to the Divine Majesty; and therefore *praying*--- in the *Spirit*, *Ephes.* vi. 18. *Praying in the holy Ghost*, *Jude* 20. and *with the Spirit*, *1 Cor.* xiv. 15. signify *praying with Grace in our Hearts*, by the Assistance and Motion of the *Holy Spirit*: And a man may as well *pray with Grace in his Heart*, when he *prays by a Form*, as sing with *Grace in his Heart*, when he *sings by a Form*.

3. We have a Promise that *God's Spirit* will assist us with this *Grace in our Hearts*, but we have no Promise that He will help us to Words without the Use of *Forms*; as will appear from *Rom.* viii. 26. *The Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities*, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the *Spirit* it self maketh *Intercession* for us with *groanings* that cannot be uttered; those inward motions in the Heart, called here *Groanings*, are that *Grace in the Heart* with which we ought to pray, and to which the *Spirit* of God doth, and indeed only can help us, and to pray with this *Grace*, is to pray in and with the *Spirit*, whether we use words or no; and if we do use them, whether we reduce them into a *Form* first, or pour

them forth as they present themselves to our Minds; but we have no Promise that the *Holy Ghost* will always furnish us with fit words on all occasions, and therefore ought not to presume that He will.

4. 'Tis certain that he did furnish some with such words, for we find both *Prayers* and *Hymns* dictated immediately by him, of which we have Examples in the *Hymns* of the *Blessed Virgin* and *Zacharias*, and in the *Song* or *Prayer* of *Simeon*, and in *Acts* iv. 24. But when it is manifest that this was an *Extraordinary Gift* of *God*, and a part of *Prophecy*, and we may not depend on the *holy Ghost* for this Gift, more then for any other *Extraordinary Gift*, till it be made appear that it was to continue always in the Church, and to be communicated to *All the Children of God*. *Praying* and *Singing the Praises of God*, are Duties incumbent on all Christians; but we are no more obliged to *pray Extemporary Prayers*, from any Example of inspired Men in Scripture, than to sing *Extemporary Hymns* from the like Examples; to which yet none, I think, pretend.

5. 'Tis very observable that even those who composed their *Prayers* and *Hymns* by immediate inspiration, did not generally offer them to God in the Congregation till they had first reduced them into a *Form*. Thus *David* first Penned his *Psalms*, and then delivered them to be sung, 1. *Chron.* xvi. 7. and 'tis probable the *Prophets*, 1. *Cor.* xiv. 26. did the same, for they are supposed, every one to have a *Psalm*, a *Doctrine*, a *Tongue*, a *Revelation*, &c. that is, to have them ready, and reduced into *Form* for the use of the Church, when they came together. That this is the meaning of *having a Psalm*, &c. in this place, will appear very probable, not only from the words which naturally import this, and can hardly be otherwise interpreted, but likewise from the *Apostles* making a difference between what these *Prophets* had



had prepared, and what was *Revealed* immediately at the time of their being together, *vers. 30. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.* Which shews that these *Psalms, &c.* were to give place to such as were immediately inspired: So far were these inspired Men from countenancing an *Extemporary Unpremeditated* way of serving God; except where there was an immediate *Revelation* for it: and so utterly void of Scripture-proof is this great principle of the *Dissenters* Worship, *that the Spirit of prayer is given to every one of the Faithfull to enable them to conceive with the Heart and express with their Tongues their necessities to God without a Form of Prayer.*

8. It lies therefore my Friends on your Teachers who are of this persuasion, to produce plain Scripture for your principles, or else to confess that you have laid a side *Prayers by Forms* commanded by God, and practised by *holy Men* in Scriptures, to make room for this way of *Praying* of Men's own Invention. But further that place, *Ecc. v. 1. 2.* seems to me to afford a strong Argument against such *Prayers, When thou goest to the House of God,---- Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth: Therefore let thy Words be few.* It is hard to say what it is to be rash with our Mouths, or hasty to utter any thing before God, if it be not rashness to trust the expressing all our desires to such uncertain and unpremeditated Words, as our Invention suggests unto us, when we come before him, which (as I have shewed) the Scriptures give us no promise of being supplied to us by the Spirit on ordinary occasions. I appeal to you whether it would not be looked on as rashness for an ordinary person to speak to a Prince, or solemn Assembly, concerning a matter of great moment, in Words unpremeditated and unformed, and we shall hardly find any so rash as to

venture on it. King *Solomon* here seems to have recommended the same modesty to Men in their Addresses to God.

9 But in as much as God has not expressly forbidden all *Extemporary Prayers*, I would not be understood by this to condemn all such as unlawful. There may be some Men (tho' not very many) able to express themselves significantly and decently, *Extempore*; and there are some occasions that require it, even in Publick; and on these occasions, when a Man has not time allowed him to reduce his desires into Form before he offers them, he may depend on the Assistance of *God's Spirit*, as we may in all other cases of necessity, or at least hope for pardon of consequence to our infirmities: But to depend on that, and neglect the Means God has given us to provide our selves, looks so like *Tempting Him*, that we ought carefully to avoid it: And I find Prudent Men are aware of this, and tho' they be very famous for *Extemporary Prayers*, yet they Pray really as much by a Form as if they had the *Common-Prayer* before them. The secret is only this, they compose *Forms of Prayer* of several sorts, digest them well in their minds, and commit them to memory; so that they can on occasion transpose the parts of them, change, add, or leave out, as they see reason; and thus they are in effect provided with a *Form*, tho' the people cannot perceive it, and admire them for their readiness and fluency. It is easie for any Man of Moderate Parts to manage the matter thus, but the more ignorant and ordinary Preachers that know not, or are not capable of the method of it, fall into very indecent and *vain Repetitions*, and are often at a loss when they strive to practice this way of Addressing to God.

Another account may be given of these seeming *Extemporary Prayers* not much different from the former, namely, That good Men who make a Conscience

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science of *secret prayer to God*, and have grown up in a constant Discharge of this *Duty*, do by degrees fall into a *Form* even with themselves; for how much soever their prayers were *Extempore* at first, yet having *continual Occasion* of praying to God for the same things, they find in time that there is but one *Best Way* of expressing the same thing; which necessarily leads to a *Form*. However, the various ways they made use of before they settled on one, serve them as so many *Forms* when they come in publick: And by changing of these, they seem to *Pray Extempore*.

10. Lastly, let me observe that the use of *Extemporary conceived prayers*, even in cases of necessity, is founded on a *General Rule* of Scripture only, which commands us to *Ask of God* what we lack; Of which Rule our own prudence makes the Application in such extemporary occasions, but when we set up this *Human Application* of this *General Rule* in opposition to that *particular manner of Asking*, commanded by God, and practised by *Holy Men*, which is by *set and premeditated Forms*, in the ordinary Worship of God, and turn God's way out of his Worship, to make room for one of our own; This is to displace a *particular command* of God on pretence of guiding our selves by a *General* one: In which we are not only more lyable to mistakes, but we fail of paying due respect to God's Directions. For *General Commands* ought only to take place in such Cases where God has not laid down a *particular Rule*.

And thus I have examined the First Principle of Dissenters; That the Spirit of Prayer is given to all the Children of God, whereby they are enabled to conceive with the Heart, and express with the Mouth convenient desires to God.

IV. I come now to speak to the Second, That all Forms of Prayer are Unlawful to Christians, and that it is a sin to join in a Worship where they are used, or so much

much as to be present at it. If there be any of you for whom I intend these Papers of this opinion, as I fear some of you are, and all of you do in your practice comply with those that maintain it, and therefore cannot acquit your selves from countenancing it; I desire you to observe that if there were no harm in the opinion, or if it were a meer Speculation, we should not be much concerned at their mistake. But by what I have shewed of the Scripture Authority of *Forms*, it is plain that they who maintain this Principle, do not only *Teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, but in effect set themselves up above *Christ*, and countermand what he has required. They not only add to the *Gospel* a new Command, by Teaching that to be unlawful which *Christ* has nowhere condemned, but they Teach that to be unlawful which he has positively commanded. Whoever therefore do Teach *Forms of Prayer* to be unlawful, or countenance those that do Teach this *Doctrine of Men*, cannot acquit themselves from the imputation of *Resisting the Holy Ghost*, by whose *Inspiration* the word of God is penned.

I can foresee only one thing that can be alledged in favour of those who maintain this Opinion, and 'tis, that to pray with, or without a *Form* (excepting the *Lord's-Prayer*) is in it self indifferent, and that therefore the asserting the use of *Forms* is not a matter of such weight, as to justify our contending with our Brethren about it; and that it seems uncharitable in us to insist on a thing which they are fully persuaded is unlawful, and we our selves count indifferent.

1. But in Answer to this, it is to be observed, First, That an opinion which necessarily divides him who believes it from the Communion of all the *Established Churches* in the World cannot be of so little moment as the objection would make it. And such is this Opinion of the *Unlawfulness of Forms of Prayer*,  
since

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since there neither is, nor has been any *Established Church* these 1500 years, but has maintained their Lawfulness, and used them in the Service of God, and therefore whoever believes them to be unlawful, in whatever

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Age he had lived, he must have seperated from all the *Established Churches* of the World at that time; and surely an Opinion that necessarily produces such a Division must be of mighty Consequence, whether true or false, and ought to be carefully examined, and if false, to be zealously opposed. But,

2. I suppose it will be granted, that eating Swines Flesh, or drinking Wine, are as indifferent as using a *Form of Prayer*, and of less concern to the Souls of Men, and that therefore to Teach these to be unlawful would be as innocent a Mistake as to Teach the unlawfulness of *Forms*. For if we compare these two Doctrines together, and the mischiefs that each of them have, or may hereafter prodace, It is hardly conceivable that the forbidding the use of some particular Meats should have so many ill effects as the forbidding *Forms of Prayer* has had already. Yet it is observable how St. Paul judges of that Doctrine, 1 Tim. iv. 1. *In the latter times (saith he) some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils---* Forbidding to Marry and to abstain from Meats, which God hath Created to be received with Thanksgiving. You see here St. Paul counts it a *Departure from the Faith*, and a *Doctrine of Devils* to forbid, as unlawful in it self, any sort of Meat which God has Created for the use of Man; and if it be so Criminal to Teach any sort of Meat to be unclean when God has not forbidden it, then sure to Teach a *Form of prayer* to be unlawful, when God has commanded it, must be a very ill Doctrine. And this consideration alone ought to make those who maintain it, or any such Doctrine whereby they are obliged

obliged to condemn their Brethren as practising unlawful things, to examine it carefully and impartially by the Word of God, lest they be imposed on by Seducing Spirits.

The great Design of the Devil is to bring us into an intire subjection to his will. But when he despairs of this, his next Attempt is to share with God in our Obedience, and impose new Commands of his own upon us, as if they were God's, and so to procure himself to be Obey'd. This he doth most successfully by giving them an appearance of Religion, and of more than ordinary Strictness. Thus in St. Paul's time, under colour of *Mortification*, he forbade *Meats* and *Marriage*, as Unlawful, which God had Allowed; *Speaking Lies in Hypocrisie*, and under shew of Religion. And thus 'tis to be feared he has prevailed on some under colour of *greater Spirituality*, to abstain from *Forms of prayer*, as Unlawful, which God has enjoined.

And here it is very remarkable, that wherever the Devil gains this point with Men, and brings them to believe a thing to be forbidden by God, which he has not forbidden, he soon brings a super-added Command of his own in Competition with some of God's and prevails with them to prefer *his Commands* to God's; and so plungeth them into direct *Disobedience*, which was his Design at first. Thus when he had prevailed with Men to abstain from *Marriage*, they soon fell not only to Commit *Fornication*, but even in some cases to Allow it, rather than *Marriage*, as the *Papists* do: And by perswading Men to abstain from *Forms of Prayer*, as Unlawful, he has deprived them in many places of all opportunity of Publick Worship, and made them choose rather not to serve God at all in Publick, than with a *Form*; which is the case of many Thousands now in this Kingdom, who worship God publicly no where. But,

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*Forms*, is no such indifferent thing, that we may safely indulge Men in their own sense about it : Since it is very apt to puff them up, and make them take false measures in judging of their own Condition, and of the influence of God's Spirit upon them.

We know that all good Men have the *spirit* of God, and are guided and influenced by it in the whole tenor of their Lives ; we make no doubt but they are assisted by Him in their prayers, but no less in forgiving an Injury, or resisting a Temptation ; and his influence on a good Man's mind is rather greater and more sensible in these and other Acts of Religion, than in Prayer. *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance,* are the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. And it is principally by these we ought to conclude that we have that Spirit. But the Opinion of the Unlawfulness of *Forms of Prayer*, on a persuasion that the Spirit of God enables every Child of God to conceive with the Heart, and express with the Mouth suitable desires, entitles every one to God's Spirit in some measure, that is able to express himself in apt and fluent Words, tho' without the other Graces of the Spirit, and exposes every one to despair that is not able to do this, as looking on himself to be destitute of the Spirit, tho' otherwise meek, humble and charitable, and endowed with such Graces as are much more certain signs of his presence. Nay, so far are many deluded by this Opinion, that they judge themselves or others Children of God, and in his Favour, according as they are more or less endowed with this Gift, without respect to other Qualifications. And I dare appeal to your selves, whether some very Immoral Persons, guilty of gross and scandalous Crimes, have not been eminent for this Gift of prayer ? And whether such Persons are not apt to flatter themselves that they are the Children of God, and endowed with his Spirit, notwithstanding all their Wickedness ?

And

And it is impossible either to convince these persons of their mistake, or to comfort poor ignorant people, dejected only for want of this *Gift*, whilst they are possessed with this Opinion of the Unlawfulness of *Forms*.

Which in the 4th place ought not to be countenanced or indulged as an indifferent thing, because it has been a great hindrance to *secret devotion*: Every Christian ought at least twice a day to address himself to God in *secret prayer*; but a great part of the World cannot do it without a *Form*; Children and ignorant persons are at a loss for Words, and even other people are often not able to find them readily, especially when wearied, dull, or indisposed, as is sometimes the condition of the best Christians; this makes *secret prayer*, at least a constant regular course of it, uneasy to most that are absolutely against all Use of *Forms*, and it occasions too many to neglect it, which otherwise would not: And as for Children and ignorant people, amongst those of this Persuasion, I am well assured many of them never bow their knees in *secret* to God; and several of those that are grown up, are forced to speak aloud, or cannot pray at all, which is against the nature of *secret prayer*; and exposes not only the Persons that use it to the censure of Hypocrisy, but the Duty to Contempt. 'Tis on this account that the pious Custom of Training up young People to a constant course of Devotion, in their morning and evening *secret prayers*, is too universally laid aside among you, as I have found by experience, and for the truth of the Observation I dare appeal to all of the Dissenters. On the contrary I am well assured that there cannot be a more effectual or easy method to revive and continue this regular and constant use of *secret prayers*, than to oblige every one to some certain *Forms* every Morning & Evening, which they may not omit, whatever other *prayers* they use: But this can never

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never be done whilst the Opinion of the unlawfulness of *Forms* prevails; and therefore all good people are obliged to oppose it, as they would retrieve the constant use of *secret prayers*; which shews that this is no indifferent matter, as the objection would suggest, but of great weight, and fit to be contended for.

I will not mention some other Reasons that are of great moment, because they would but exasperate, and tend to make the Duty of *prayer*, when performed *extempore*, ridiculous, which ill Men might extend (as it too often happens) to expose Devotion in general; such are the indecent Expressions which sometimes fall from persons that *pray* thus: I will only observe to you, that *Extemporary prayers* of some Preachers have too often given occasion of Offence to serious persons even among your selves. 'Tis certain, that to print some of them, as they have been spoken, as those that we make use of are printed, would not be for the Honour of the Holy Spirit, to whom they are ascribed, nor much recommend them to serious Men. But I esteem it an ill thing for Men to ridicule one anothers Devotion, whatever it is.

V. There remains yet the Third Opinion of Dissenters which they advance against us in this matter of *prayer*, to be Examined, *That the Minister is the Mouth of the Congregation, and that the people have nothing to do but to joyn with him in their Hearts*; An Opinion far from any Authority of Scripture, which expressly requires us, *Rom. xv. 6.* with *one Mind*, and *one Mouth*, to glorify God; We produce this, and many other places and Examples in Scripture, for the people's *joyning their voices*, and bearing a part in their *praises and prayers*; and we are assured there is no Scripture forbids it; and therefore when you Condemn it, or teach it to be Unlawful, we must charge it upon You, as an instance of Your Teaching  
for

*for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* Which is all I think needful to be said to this Head, after what I have shewed before in defence of our contrary practice from Scripture; and, I think, sufficient to induce you seriously to consider it.

And thus, I presume, I have faithfully examined the Rules and Examples the Scriptures afford us for the performance of that part of our publick Worship that consists in *prayers*, and compared the Service of our Church, and the Dissenters way of *praying*, with them, and made it appear that our performance of this Duty, both as to the Matter and Manner, is agreeable to the Commandments of God, and to the Examples of Holy Men recorded in Scripture: And that the Service the Dissenters have substituted in the room thereof, has in many particulars laid aside God's Commands, and deserted the Examples of Scripture, and is in the main part thereof an immediate *Invention of Men*.

And I intreat you who are of this Persuasion, and adhere to these Principles of Worship which I have now mentioned, and shewed to be disagreeable to Scripture, to consider seriously whether you are not thereby literally guilty of that Sin with which our Saviour taxeth the Jews, *Mark vii. 7. of Teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*; And also of that Superstition condemned by *St. Paul, Col. ii. 21.* which saith, *Touch not, taste not, handle not,* (that is, which teaches to forbear those things which God has made Lawful) *after the Doctrines and Commandments of Men*: And I beseech God to enlighten your Minds to make a true Judgment in it, that you may deliver your Souls.

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## CHAP. III.

### Of Hearing.

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#### Sect. 1.

*What the Holy Scriptures prescribe concerning it.*

I. **O**NE great design of Our Christian Assemblies is *Hearing*, and that which is to be heard, is, *the Word of God*. I shall proceed in examing this, in the same manner as I have done in the former Chapters ; And consider, First, What Directions the Scriptures afford us for the publick performance of this Duty. Secondly, shall compare our own practice with them. And, Thirdly, That of the Dissenters.

First then, God has positively Commanded us to read His Word in our publick Assemblies. So *Deut. xxxi. 10.* *In the feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place where the Lord shall choose. Thou shalt read this Law before all Israel in their Hearing. Gather the people together, Men, Women and Children, and thy Stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the Words of this Law.* And 'tis observed, *Jos. viii. 35.* *that there was not a word of all that Moses Commanded, which Joshua read not before all the Congregation.*

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Neither

Neither was this confined to their Solemn Assemblies at Jerusalem ; It was likewise a constant part of their Sabbath Service in their Synagogues. As we may learn from *Acts* xiii. 14. where it is observed, that *Paul and Barnabas went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down ; and after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the Rulers of the Synagogue sent unto them, &c.* and *St. Paul* takes notice, *vers.* 27. that the *Prophets were read every Sabbath day*, meaning undoubtedly in their Assemblies. And *St. James* (*Acts* xv. 21. ) of *Moses* his being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day.

II. This reading the Law was the great, and most effectual means God provided for preserving the the knowledge of himself among his people ; and where it was omitted, the people immediately sunk into Idolatry ; and the best Reformation began, and was carried on by Restoring this Ordinance. Thus 'tis observed of *Josiah*, *2 Chron.* xxxiv. 29. that he gathered together all the Elders of Judah and Jerusalem — And all the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the Priests and the Levites, and all the people great and small, and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the Covenant that was found in the House of the Lord. The like is observed of *Ezra*, *Neh.* viii. 3. And he read therein before the street that was before the Water-gate, from Morning untill Mid-day, before the Men and the Women, and all that could understand. 'Tis remarkable that after the Captivity, the Jews never fell into Idolatry : and the chief reason given by themselves was the strict Observation of this Ordinance of God, the Law being constantly read to them afterwards publicly in their Synagogues ; so powerfully doth God bless his own Ordinances to preserve those that use them from Error and Sin.

III. From the practice of the Synagogue in reading the Law and the Prophets, the like Order was brought



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brought into the *Christian Church*; and *Reading* was made a part of the office of the *Christian Elders*, as it was before of the *Jewish*. And hence it is that *Timothy* is Commanded by *St. Paul*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 13. *To give attendance to Reading as well as to Exhortation and Doctrine.* And the inspired Writings of the *Apostles* were read in the *Christian Assemblies*, as well as the *Law* and *Prophets* among the *Jews*; According to *St. Paul's* Command, *Col.* iv. 16. *When this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it also be read in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea.* And it was but reason, since the *Gospel* contained the *Christian Law*, that it should be read in the *Christian Assemblies*, as well as the *Law of Moses* was in the *Synagogues*. And that it was so read in the first *Christian Assemblies*, I might shew by many instances out of the *Antient Fathers*, if there were occasion.

IV. This publick *Reading the Law* was of so great Reputation, that it is termed *Preaching* it; as we may see from *Acts* xv. 21. *For Moses of Old time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day.* The word *Preaching* has a peculiar sence in the *New Testament*, and signifies properly to Declare or Proclaim the Word of God, as a Herald or Cryer proclaims the Laws or Orders of a King. Hence only those that Proclaim'd the *Gospel* to such as had not heard it before, or read the *Old Testament* to the people, are said to *Preach*. *Preaching* is distinguished from *Teaching* and *Exhortation*; and 'tis observable, that in the whole *New Testament*, tho' reading the *Scriptures* is called *Preaching*, yet interpreting them, applying them, or exhorting the people from them in a *Christian Auditory*, is never called by that name.

If it be objected that *St. Paul* is said to *preach to the Disciples*, *Acts* xx. 7. when he only in probability made a Sermon, or Exhortation to Believers, as

is usual now ; I answer, that the Original of the Word ( *κηρυγμα* ) is never translated *preach* in any other place of the New Testament, and should not have been here, but *discours'd, disputed, shake, or reason'd* ; so it is translated in *Acts* xvii. 2. 17. xviii. 19 xix. 8, 9. *Heb* xii. 5. &c. for the Original Words which properly signifie *preaching* are *κηρυξ* and *κηρυγμα*. From all which it is manifest that there are only two ways by which the word of God is properly *preached* ; the first is, when it is declared to those that never heard of it before ; and the second is when the very words of the Scripture are read publickly to the people, as a Cryer doth a Proclamation, which he doth not word himself, but *reads* it in the words in which it is delivered to him.

In short, The Scriptures are *sermons* out of the Mouth of God, being dictated by his *Holy Spirit* ; for the *Reading* of which to the People for their Conviction and Instruction, there is a peculiar Command of God ; and where this *Orlinance* is duly observed they are sure of the *Word of Life* ; and 'tis impossible they should be ignorant of their Duty, for the *Scriptures* are sufficient to make them wise to salvation ; and the *hearing* them with Humility and Attention, is a means sufficient to beget Faith in the Hearts of those that *hear them* ; for they are profitable for *Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good Works, as we see 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. 17.

V. We find in *Holy Scripture* that the Publick *Reading* of the Word of God was with great Solemnity. 'Tis observed *Nebem.* viii. 5, *When Ezra opened the Book, all the people stood up, and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God ; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands, and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground ;* and I find it generally agreed that both the *Readers* and *Hearers* stood up whilst the *Law* was read, who  
not

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not when other things were read or taught; hence it is observed *Luke iv. 16.* that our Saviour stood up for to read, and *vers. 20.* after closing the Book, that he sat down to Teach: Hence *Rev. v.* God is represented in allusion to the *High-Priest*, with a Book in his Right Hand, containing the Revelations of his Will; and the Lamb, as his Minister, takes it out of his Hand to declare the Contents of it; and *vers. 8.* When he had taken the Book, the four Beasts and four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb ----- And they sung a New Song: The Angels joyn with them, *vers. 11.* and the whole Creation, *vers. 13.* From whence we see the Scriptures teach us to receive the Revelations of God's Will out of the Book of Life, with Adoration and Praises: And therefore we find that at the Reading the Law, Confessions and Praises of God, were intermixed, and succeeded one another, *Neh. ix. 3.* And they stood up in their place, and read in the Book of the Lord their God one fourth part of the Day, and another fourth part they Confessed and Worshiped the Lord their God,

VI. We find that the Word of God is to be read in such a Language as the People understand. After the Captivity, the People being Born and Educated in a strange Land, their Language was changed, and they did not understand, at least Universally, the pure *Hebrew* in which the Law was first written; therefore when *Ezra* read in the Law, a certain number of the *Priests* and *Levites* interpreted the Words of the Law, as *Ezra* read them to the People: *Neh. viii. 7.* And they caused the people to understand the Law, and the people stood in their place; so they read in the Book in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading: And this Custom continueth among the Jews to this Day; first the *Hebrew Text* is read, and then a *Translation* or *Paraphrase*, in a Language understood by the Hearers. And indeed there may be good reason for

reading the *Originals* in Publick Assemblies, such a Custom being an effectual means to preserve the knowledge of them; but they cannot be useful to the People without a Translation. Therefore St. Paul doth not absolutely forbid speaking in Unknown Tongues in the Church, but orders, 1 Cor. xiv. 27. *Let one interpret; but if there be no Interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church.*

VII. We find that after *reading the Word of God*, there was sometimes an Enlargement or Comment on some part of it, and an Exhortation to the People. Thus when our Saviour had *Read* a portion of Scripture, He applied it to the People in a Discourse to that purpose. But it doth not appear that this was constantly done, on the contrary it is rather probable that it was not. For had there been a constant Provision for such Enlargement, and Exposition of the *Law*, and Exhortation from it, there had been no occasion for the Rulers of the *Synagogue*, *Acts* xiii. 15. to send to St. Paul and Barnabas, after the *reading the Law and Prophets*, that Message we find there, *Ye Men and Brethren, if ye have any Word of Exhortation for the people, say on.* St. Paul supposes him who *Teaches*, and him whose Office it was to *Exhort*, distinct from him that *Ruled*, and him that *Ministered*, *Rom.* xii. And it doth not appear that every Church was furnished with all these *Officers*. The same St. Paul joyned *Exhortation* and *Doctrine* with *Reading*, in his Charge to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 13. which shews that they went together, but whether indispensibly or no, doth not appear; tho' it is manifest in the practice of most Churches in the Ages after the *Apostles*, they were all generally exercis'd in the Publick Worship.

VIII. Lastly, We find that they had a *Summary* of the Principal Doctrines of the Gospel, which they delivered to the people, and by which they ordered their own Discourses, and judged of what was delivered

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vered by others. Thus St. Paul to Timothy, 2 Tim. i. 13. *Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me; and Chap. ii. Vers. 2. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others:* Perhaps this may be that Proportion of faith according to which the Prophets are exhorted to prophesie, Rom. xii. 6. I think it is not doubted but this form of sound Words containing the main Fundamentals of Christianity; and St. Paul tells us what those were, Heb. vi. 1, 2. *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands, and of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment.* In all probability therefore the form of sound Words delivered by St. Paul to Timothy, and by him to others, contained these six Heads or Principles of Christianity, which every Christian was obliged to Hear and Learn.

## SECT. 2.

### *The Practise of our Church in Reading and Preaching the Word.*

THESE are the Rules and Examples the Scriptures propose to us for our feeding the people with the Word of Life, and their Hearing it in Publick. Let us in the second place compare the Practise of our Church with them, and surely no copy can come nearer the Original.

1. For first, Our Ministers are expressly oblig'd in their Ordination, diligently to read all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament unto the people Assembled in the Church where they shall be appointed to serve.

2. Our Church has disposed the Holy Scriptures in

a certain Order, and has appointed *Four* or more Chapters to be *Read* every day in the Publick Congregations, by which means all the most edifying parts of the *Old Testament* are Ordered to be *Read* once a Year, and the *New Testament* (except the *Revelations*) thrice in the same time; And some select Chapters of the *Revelations* are appointed on Extraordinary Occasions. There are indeed some Chapters (about one tenth) of the *Old Testament* left out of this Order: But then it is to be observed, that those which are left out, are either Genealogies, names of Persons and Places, Historical repetitions, or some obscure and mystical Prophecies in *Ezekiel*, which are not so proper for an Ordinary Assembly (for which reasons, some part of the *Revelations* is also left out) yet these are not excluded, tho' not particularly Commanded. The general obligation on every Clergy-Man in his Ordination to *Read all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament*, still allows him to read these, and also obliges him to it when he shall perceive that it may be for the Edification of the people.

3. Besides this Order for the whole Scriptures, on every *Lord's-day*, and other Solemn Occasions, there are appointed certain select Portions out of the Epistles and Gospels to be *Read*, which are adapted to the occasion; and contain some great mystery of our Faith, or other weighty matter necessary to our Edification.

4. For the more solemnity of these Readings; Our Church joyns with each of them Praises, Thanksgivings or Confessions, according to what we find practised in the *Holy Scripture*.

5. That the people may benefit, and be Edified by *hearing* the Word of God, a plain Authentick and most excellent *Translation* is provided by publick Authority, in which the Scriptures are *Read* to the People. This was the first care of Our Church in the



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*Reformation*, and the generality of *Dissenters* are forced to be beholden to it for the *Word of Life*, and draw all the knowledge that they have from the Fountains which our *Bishops* opened for them, by *Translating* the Word of God, and putting it into a Language that they understand.

6. 'Tis ordered in Our *Church* that the Ministers shall explain some part of the *Holy Scriptures* every *Lord's-day*, and exhort their Congregations in a Sermon.

7. To inculcate the great Mysteries of our Faith the better, Our *Church* has appointed certain solemn times, wherein once in the Year they are obliged to explain, and inculcate every great Mystery of our Faith, and most material Passages of the Gospel. Such are the Conception, Birth, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of Our *Saviour*.

Lastly, There is provided a form of *Sound Words* in a short and plain *Catechism*; in which are contained the *first Principles of the Oracles of God*; this is adapted, as it ought to be, to the capacity of Children, and is indeed *sincere Milk*, without School Notions, or hard Words. And all the six Principles which the Apostle mentions, *Heb. vi. 1. 2.* are briefly explained in it, and yet largely enough to make those that attend to it *Wise to Salvation*. The Teaching and Explaining these Fundamentals, is a part of our Publick Instruction, and enjoined as a constant Duty on Ministers and People in our Solemn *Worship*. The Minister in each Parish being required diligently upon *Sundays* and *Holy-days*---- openly in the Church to instruct and examine so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of the Catechism, and the people are obliged to come at the time appointed, and obediently to hear.

And by our *Twelfth Canon*, for the better grounding of the people in the Principles of Christian Religion,

gion, 'tis Ordained, *That the Heads of the Catechism being divided into so many parts as there are Sundays in the Year, shall be explained to the people in every Parish Church.*

This is the care Our Church has taken to *Teach* the People in their Publick Assemblies, and the method is so effectual, that 'tis scarce conceivable how any one who duly conforms to these Orders should be ignorant of any thing that concerns his Soul.

And by the blessing of God, the effect is such that we may affirm without Vanity or Partiality, that our Clergy and Laity, especially where we can prevail with them to conform to the Rules of Our Church, are generally much more Knowing, Modest, Governable, Devout and Charitable, then perhaps may be found in any other Church; of which our late Contests with the *Papists*, and behaviour under their Government, and since the present *Revolution*, are evident Proofs.

### SECT. 3.

#### *The Practice of the Dissenters in Hearing, and Reading the Word,*

I Come now to consider with you my Friends who dissent from us, how this great Duty of *Teaching* the People the *Law of God* is perform'd in your Assemblies, and to compare your practice in this point with the Scripture Rules and Examples. Which I shall do with the same Candour and Integrity that I have hitherto endeavoured to observe.

I. And here I must needs say that your Teachers seem to have had very little Regard, either to *Scripture* Rules or Examples in framing this part of your *worship*, having laid aside all those methods of Instruction that the *Scriptures* recommend to us, except it be that of Exposition and Exhortation: Which among you is called *Preaching*, in so much, that tho'  
a Man

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a Man frequent your Meetings all his Life, yet he has no security, or hardly possibility of learning from your publick Teachings all the great Mysteries of his Religion, or the necessary Principles of his Falth.

1. For first, Your *preachers* are intirely left to their choice what place of *Scripture* they will explain, or what Subject they will handle: And hence it happens that hardly any one Man in his life ever goes through the necessary Articles of Faith, or of practice, in his Publick *sermons*; and for the truth of this I appeal to your selves.

2. You have no summary of *principles* enjoined to be either *Read* or *Taught* in your Publick Assemblies. A *Catechism* you have, but neither your *Directory* nor *Practice* make it any part of your *Lord's-day-Service*; And besides your *Catechism* is such, that it no ways answers the design of a *Form of sound Words*. I have already shewed that such a *Form* should contain only the first and necessary *principles* of the *Oracles of God*, in such Words and Methods as may make it easily apprehended and retained by the weak and unlearned, which make up the bulk of the people. But your *Catechism* is full of Hard Words, School Terms, and Abstruse Notions, no wise necessary to be known by the generality of Christians, or possible to be understood by Children, or unlearned Persons, for whose Edification principally a *Catechism* ought to be contrived. Besides all this, it is so long and intricate, even the Shorter that not one child in ten ever gets it by heart, nor one in five hundred retains it, as I have found by experience, and desire that you would judge of this matter as you find upon trial. Lastly, After all, it is imperfect; some of the Principles of the *Apostles Catechism*, being quite left out of it, I mean *laying on of hands*; Joyned with *Baptism*, *Heb. vi. 2.* a great defect sure in a *Catechism* to leave out a Fundamental of Christianity.

II. But

II. But the most sad and deplorable defect of your performance of this Duty, is your casting out the *Reading* of the Word of God, from most of your Publick Assemblies, directly contrary to God's Institution and Ordinance for the Instruction of his *Church*; insomuch that in many of your Meetings, setting aside a verse or two for a *Text*, or Quotation at the discretion of the *Teacher*, the voice of God is never publickly heard amongst them. This is matter of fact, and undeniable; And in all the Meetings in the *North* of *Ireland* in a whole year, perhaps there is not so much *Scripture* read, as in one day in *Our Church*, by the strictest enquiry which I cou'd make. One wou'd think this alone were sufficient to shew the people where the *Worship of God* is to be found in its *Purity*, and to prove our Assemblies to be the *True Church* of God, against all that come in competition with us; whereof some hide the *Word of God*, in a strange Language, and others banish it out of their Meetings. It being in our Congregations only, that the Voice of God is heard speaking to his *People*, without Cover or Gloss. Sure it is a sad thing that a Man may go to most Meetings many years, and never hear one intire Chapter read in them. Now this Omission is the more inexcusable in you, and must render you manifestly self-condemned.

1. First, Because you so vehemently press the necessity of *Preaching*, and Quote the *Holy Scriptures* to prove it. In which, *Reading the Law* (as is shewed before) is termed *Preaching*, *Act. xv. 21.* but interpreting the *Scriptures* applying them, or exhorting the Congregation from them in a fixed Christian Auditory (which you count *Preaching*) is never called so in the whole *New Testament*. Therefore by laying aside the reading the *Scriptures* in your Publick Assemblies, you have intirely cast aside *Preaching*, in the proper Scripture-sense of it. But,

2. This

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2. This must render you self-condemned, because you pretend to honour the *Holy Scriptures* above other Christians. Your Mouths, *Commendably*, and with just Reason, are continually full of the praises of the *Holy Bible*; you own it, with the generality of the *Reformed Churches*, for the only sufficient *Rule of Faith* you appeal to it, and seem to found your selves on it: And yet your not allowing the *Reading* of it a constant place in your Religious Assemblies, makes it seem as if you had a very low Opinion of it in your hearts. If you really value it as you profess, why do you banish the *Reading* of it from your publick *Worship*, to make room for *Discourses*, *Lectures*, and *Sermons* of your own Teachers? Remember of whom it is said; (*Mark vii. 6.*) *This people honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me.* While you thus juggle the Word of God out of your Solemn Meetings, to make room for your own *Sermons*, I beseech you to consider whether this be not a laying aside the Commandments of God for Men's Inventions; unless you will call your *Sermons* (as some Quakers are said to do) as much the Word of God as the Bible.

III. I look on this as so Material a Point, and conceive the Honour of the *Holy Scriptures* and the Salvation of Christians to be so deeply concerned in it, that I think my self obliged to Examine the Pretences I have found to justify it; Tho' I confess they seem to me so weak, that I am afraid I shall be almost suspected by indifferent persons not to do Justice in representing them, for it is unaccountable that any body should urge so slight Reasons for so considerable an Omission, and yet these are all I have ever met with, or heard from you.

The first Reason I have heard urg'd, is, *That the people are obliged to read the Scriptures at home, and being thus acquainted with them, the Reading of them is not necessary in their publick Meetings.* But to this I Answer,

1. That

1. That we see from what has been said, That the *Reading* of the Holy Scriptures is by God's Appointment a part of his solemn *publick Worship*; therefore to leave it out in our Assemblies, on any pretence whatsoever, is to lay aside his Command, and so to corrupt and dismember his Worship.

2. The private performance of a Duty ought by no means to interfere with, or hinder the publick. We must pray to God, praise him, and instruct our Families in private; and yet God forbid that our doing these Privately, should banish the use of them from our Publick Assemblies; or that any one should think himself excused from Attending on the *publick* Performance of them, on account of his *private* Diligence in them: And the same Rule holds for *Reading the Holy Scriptures*.

3. God tells the Children of *Israel*, *Dent. vi. 6.* *That these Words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up — and thou shalt write them on the posts of thy House.* Here is as much private diligence in *Reading* and *Teaching* the Law, required of the *Israelites*, as any Christian can pretend to exercise; and yet all this care to preserve the knowledge of the Law by *private* study and exercise, did not make the *Reading* it in their Synagogues unnecessary, or prevent God from requiring them to use it as part of his publick *Worship*, *Dent. xxxi. 11.* And therefore all your diligence in reading the Scriptures privately, or your Teachers exhorting and requiring you to do it, ought not to warrant Their or Your dispensing with the Command of God, that appoints the *Reading* his Word as part of his publick Service. But,

4. When people are left to themselves in *private* they may either do or not do a thing, as they please:  
And



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And we are assured that there are many who come to Church, and hear the *Word of God* read there, that neither can, nor ever wou'd be at the pains to read it in *private*. It is therefore a great Temptation to the People to be negligent, and a great want of Care in a *Church*, to leave so material a thing as the *Reading of the Word of God*, to *private* diligence. We find by experience, that where no publick effectual care is taken to inform the generality of Men, the Knowledge of *God's Word* sensibly decays, and is in a fair way to be lost. The *Papists* Read the Scriptures in a Language that the people do not understand, and we see into what gross ignorance they are fallen by this means. Those of *your persuasion* ( generally speaking ) do not read them at all in your Meetings, and the consequence of this is, That many of your common people are strangers to the very History of the Bible, and the First Principles of Christianity; as I have found on Tryal, to my great trouble and astonishment. This pretence therefore of *peoples Reading the Holy Scriptures in private*, will by no means justify you, for breaking *God's Command*, in omitting the publick *Reading* them, as a part of *God's Service*, in the Congregations.

IV. The *Second Pretence* that I have met with for this Omission, is, *That since the penning of the Scriptures, and settling of the Church by the Apostles, the case is much altered with Christians; That Printing was not then known, and consequently Copies of the Bible were few, and hard to come by: few could then read them if they had them, and therefore ( say some ) Reading the Scriptures in the Assemblies was then absolutely necessary, otherwise the generality must have been strangers to them: but now Copies of the Bible by means of Printing, are become common, and easie to be had, and most families have some in them that can read; And therefore the publick Reading them is not now necessary.*

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1. The plain Answer to this is, *First*, That the *Reading* the Scriptures publickly is an Institution of God: Therefore to lay it aside on the account of the Invention of *Printing*, is in effect to say, That Men have found out a better way to propagate the Knowledge of *God's Word*, than He Instituted; and plainly to lay aside his Command, for *Mens own Inventions*.

2. God has promised that there shall be always *Religious Assemblies*, and has commanded his *Word* to be read in them, which is a certain means to preserve the Knowledge thereof, as long as there is a *Church*; but he has no where promised the constant commonness of *Bibles*, nor ability to people to read them at home. To omit therefore the Institution of God for Teaching *his Word*, and to rely on peoples procuring and reading Copies of the *Bible* privately, is to leave God's way, and presumptuously depend on that which has no Promise annexed to it.

3. How easie soever we may imagine the obtaining Copies of the *Bible*, and notwithstanding the number of those that can read, there are still many Families, even amongst *Protestants*, that can neither compass a *Bible*, or get any to read it, if they had one; and therefore this Expedient is no ways sufficient to supply the Design of God's Institution, in commanding it to be read publickly.

4. Let us suppose *Bibles* to be as common as we can desire, and that every one can read them, yet who will secure us that they will do it? People whilst the first Fervour of a *Reformation* is on them, may perhaps be diligent so long as the Scripture is a Novelty to them, or Zeal for a party inspires them; but when this wears off, as it generally does in a little time, we see by experience that their care of *Reading* and *Meditating* in the *Scriptures* decays with it; and there are at this day too many of all Parties that neither *Read* themselves, nor *Hear* one Chapter  
read

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read in a whole Year, except at Church. And therefore to omit the publick *Reading* them, on presumption that the people will do it themselves, since it is so easie for them to do it, is the ready way to introduce an Universal Ignorance of *God's Word*, and reduce us again to *Popery*; the most effectual Bar against which, is the *Bible* in our own Language.

5. People may be obliged to come to the publick Congregations, and hear the *Word of God Read*, though they have no inclination to it, and when they neglect they may be reprov'd or punished, but this is not practical when the Scriptures are required only to be *Read in private Families*. Experience shews us that there is great difference between these two Methods in point of Efficacie. We see in *England* and *Wales*, where publick *Reading* was practis'd; the people generally embraced the *Reformation*, but in *Ireland*, where the same care was not taken, they rejected it. Had *God's Way* been taken, and the *Scriptures* as constantly *Read* to the Native *Irish*, in a Language they understood, as it was in *England* or *Wales*, there is little doubt but the *Reformation* had succeeded as Universally here as it did there; but the want of this has kept them in ignorance to this day, which may convince us how ineffectual all our Contrivances are to enlighten Men, in respect of *God's Institution*. I am perswaded that if ever the Native *Irish* be brought to the Knowledge of *God's Word*, it must be by having it *Read* to them publickly in a Language they understand, and not by thrusting *Bibles* privately into their hands; of the ineffectualness of which, we have had an Experiment of 150 Years.

6. But Lastly, Instead of all other Arguments, None of us are ignorant, that the *Word of God* cannot be presumed to have the same Efficacie when *Read privately*, as it hath when *Read* in the *Assemblies* of Christians, according to *God's Appointment*: Since he has given us a peculiar Promise to be present in

such *Assemblies*. And there are no diligent *Hearers* of the *Word* publicly Read, but are able from their own experience to testify, that they often find it to have a different force and efficacy, when they *hear it Read*, as a part of his *Ordinance*; in the *publick Assemblies*, in which he has peculiarly promis'd His presence, than when they *Read it in private* by themselves.

The *Third* pretence I have found alledged for omitting the regular reading the *Bible* in your Meetings, is, *That it takes up too much time, and is a hind'rance to the more profitable Duty, of what you commonly call Preaching.*

1. I intreat you to consider, That there is a *Time for every thing*, and since God has appointed *Reading his Word* a *Time* and room in our *Publick Assemblies*, who are we, that we should presume to throw it out? This surely is to set up our selves against God, and to think that we are able to Order things better for the Edification of his *Church* than he has done. Surely we ought rather to take care so to dispose our *Sermons*, that they may not interfere with any other Institution of God: But, that whatever time we allow them, there may remain sufficient for *Reading God's Holy Word*; Which I have proved is in *Scripture Language Preaching*; And therefore to justify this out to make our own discourses longer, is plainly to prefer our way of *Preaching* to God's. If there were a necessity that one or the other must be omitted, Modesty ought to Teach us to omit our own Words rather than God's.

2. Suppose that upon some Extraordinary Occasion it may be Lawful to omit *Reading God's Word* in our Assemblies, that we may have the more time to manage a discourse for the Instruction of the People, yet it can never be justifiable to make this a common practice; for that would be to put a manifest Contempt on the *Word of God*.

A *Fourth* Pretence against *Reading the Scriptures publicly*

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publicly in a Regular Method, is, That they are hard to be understood, or applyed, and therefore only so much of them ought to be read at a time as the Minister may explain and apply to his Auditory. And that one Verse thus Applied, is better than many Chapters read without such Application.

1. It is to be consider'd, First, That it is against the general opinion of the Reformed Churches, who universally Teach that the Scriptures are plain, in all things necessary to Salvation. And therefore there is not that universal necessity of an explanation of every place of Scripture that is to be read, as is pretended.

2. The Holy Scriptures when Heard with Humility and Attention, apply themselves better than any Man can do it. The Words of them are the Words of God, and they have a Plainness, Force and Spirit in them, which no Humane Eloquence can improve, and therefore it is a great affront to them to say that they have little Efficacy except a Minister apply them.

3. Suppose one Verse well applied to be better than many Chapters (for which there is no colour) yet this would not justify the omission of Reading them publicly; for no Application can be so well made of them whilst people are not thoroughly acquainted with them. It ought therefore to be our first care to Read them to the people often and solemnly, that they may be acquainted with the whole Body of them, and then one word of Application may do more good than many Sermons to people not so prepared with the general knowledge of them.

The Literal knowledge of the Will of God must always go before the Saving, and is the best Introduction to it. Now the reading the Law in the Ears of the People is the Means appointed by God to Teach them that Literal knowledge; and therefore while your Teachers have laid aside this Means of God's Appointment,

ment, they have in a great measure debarred people of the *Spiritual* and *Saving* knowledge of his *Will*.

4. Fourthly, *Reading* a Verse or two, and trusting to the Ministers *Application*, without the peoples being acquainted with the whole body of the Scriptures, does put Christians too much in the power of their *Teachers*, and makes them liable to be seduced by them. This is the very Artifice whereby the *Romish* Priests keep their people in ignorance; and your *Teachers* using the same Method ( while it is manifest that so great a part of their people either do not, or cannot, *read* them at home ) seems too like a design on their *Hearers*, and tempts the World to suspect that they are afraid of the naked simplicity of the Scriptures, since they dare not trust their people with *Hearing* them *publicly Read*, except they add their own glosses to them.

The *Fifth* Pretence that I have met with for laying aside the *publick* reading the *Word of God*, is, *That the dead Letter ( as some call it ) is a dull formal thing, without Spirit or Life, where it is not applied to the Souls of Men, by the Spirit of God speaking in his Ministers, and that without such Assistance, the Scriptures have little Efficacy on the Heart.*

I hope there are few of any Communion will own this Pretence, since it is so horrid a Reflection, and affront on the *Word of God*. I will however in answer to it offer these following Considerations.

1. That the *Holy Scriptures* give a Character of themselves very different from this. They represent the *word of God* as *the sword of the spirit*, as *quick and powerful*, as *able to make a Man wise unto salvation*, as *giving wisdom to the simple*, as *Converting the Soul*, with many other Expressions to denote the Efficacy thereof on the hearts of Men; and therefore to reflect on the *Word* as *dull and formal*, as a *meer dead Letter* that cannot engage the attention of the *Hearers*, or reach their *Hearts*, is too near Blasphemy.

2. We



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2. We are certain that God speaks to us immediately by his Holy Spirit in his Word : And where the Spirit of God is, there is Power. But when Men speak their own Words, or pretend to apply the Words or Passages of Scripture, tho' they seem to do it with the greatest Zeal and Learning, yet they may be mistaken, nay, they may deceive us : And therefore wholly to lay aside the immediate dictates of the Holy Ghost recorded in the Scriptures for any pretended Explication, or Application, made by Men, is manifestly to exchange God's undoubted Words and Command for what may be a meer Human Invention.

3. 'Tis to be considered, that the people have always been apt to grow weary of the Service of God in the way of his own appointment, and complain of it, as dull and tedious, so *Mal. i. 13. Ye said also what a weariness is it, and ye snuffed at it.* And the reason is because the way of God's Appointing is always more Spiritual, in respect of that which is of Man's own Invention, and therefore it cannot be so easy or agreeable to the Carnal minds of Men.

4. It ought therefore to be considered by you, when people complain of being dull, and unaffected by meer Hearing the Word of God read, whether this do not truly proceed from a Carnal and Wicked Heart, estranged from the Spirit of God, and whether the reason that *Sermons* please and affect more then a Chapter out of the Bible be not the novelty and outward Ornaments of them, rather than the Spiritualness of the discourse. We are sure St. Paul supposeth such as are not affected with the Words of God, to be meer Natural, or Carnal Men, *1 Cor. ii. 13.* where having taken Notice of speaking, *Not in Words which Man's Wisdom Teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost Teacheth,* he adds, *but the Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : For they are foolishness to him, neither can he*

*know them, for they are Spiritually discerned.* From whence it clearly follows, that the reason why Men do not understand or receive the things of God delivered to them in the Words of Scripture, dictated by the Holy Ghost, is, because they are meer Natural Men, and want the Spirit of God. Whoever therefore is more affected, or delights more in a *Sermon* then in a Chapter of the Bible, has reason to look into his Heart, and examine himself whether he have the Spirit of God. Those mentioned in Scripture that had that Spirit, delighted in the Law of God: It was the joy of their Hearts; they preferred it to all things, they *meditated in it Day and Night*; And were so far from turning it out of their Publick Assemblies, that the *Hearing* it read in them was a great part of their Worship. Whoever therefore lay aside this practice, have reason to suspect that they want that Temper and Spirit with which those Holy Men were inspired; and notwithstanding all their pretences to a more then ordinary Spiritualness and Reformation, are little advanced above the Natural Men, that neither receive nor relish the things of God, at least not as they ought.

I find it alledged as a Sixth pretence for not *Reading* the Word of God in your Meetings, *That a Child may read them, and perform this Duty; and then what need it take up the Ministers time.*

To which there needs no other answer then that the Service of God is not less his, or the less to be valued because it is easy. On the contrary 'tis the more sinfull to neglect it, the more easy it is. Ministers are not set apart for difficult things only, which others cannot perform; but they are to execute the Office that God has imposed on them, whether it be easy or difficult. As for Example. God has Commanded his Ministers to Baptise, *In the Name of the Father &c.* Now to pour on Water in this Form is no such difficult thing, but a Child, or any

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any else might perform it ; Neither is there any greater difficulty in the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, as to all that is of absolute necessity in it. Yet I suppose it will be granted by all, that it belongs only to the *Minister's Office* to perform these, and that they must not delegate them, or any part of them to others, or omit them because they are easy ; And that they have a quite different Sacredness, Efficacy and Force, when performed by a Person *Ordained* and *Authorized* to this purpose, than when performed by another ; and the same Rule holds in offering up our *Prayers*, and in *Reading the Scriptures* : A Man may read them at home, a Child may read them in Church, but they have not the same assurance of Efficacy, and a blessing, as when they come from the Mouth of a Person set a-part by *God's Ordinance* for this purpose.

I make no doubt but the Experience ( as as I have said ) of most Christians, from what they have felt in their own Hearts in *Hearing* the Word of God publicly read, will attest the Truth of this. Now if you, *My Friends*, know and own this, as I hope the generality of you do, you must see the unreasonableness of this pretence. If any of you do not know it, you must give me leave to say that I fear it is from ignorance, and not considering the *Scriptures*. And 'tis your *Teachers Duty* to inform you better. *Reading the Scripture* being allowed by their *Directory* to be a part of *God's Publick Worship*. We have this Rule there in express words, *That it is requisite, that all the Canonical Books be read over in order, that the people may be better acquainted with the whole Body of Scriptures*. Now if you can shew but one Meeting in the last Age, in which this has been duly performed, we will not accuse you so generally of violating *God's Command* in this point ; but if there be not one such Meeting, you ought to consider how you will excuse your selves before *God*. And I think

think it necessary here to observe to you how insignificant general Rules are without descending to a particular Determination of Circumstances. Here we have in your *Directory* a general Rule ( such as it is ) for *Reading* the Scripture, but for want of being particular, as the *Calendar* in our *Common-Prayer-Book* is, I question if it yet was ever once observed, or indeed that it is *Practical* to observe it. And it is so almost in every other general Rule, and therefore to leave the the Service of God to be Ordered by such general Rules only, is in effect to Teach people to neglect it.

V. These are all the Reasons that I can possibly think of, or have heard urged for your practice in this point. I will not say but others may be pretended, but I must profess that I do not remember to have met with them; if I had, I would have given them a due consideration: I am perswaded that they cannot be of greater force than those I have examined. And that they can never excuse you in this matter, from manifest breach of God's Command, in perfering *Mens Inventions* to his *Institutions*.

After all, I much profess to you, That I look on all these to be only *Pretences*; and that the true Reason of Mens Negligence in this *Duty*, is given us, 2 *Tim. iv. 3.* *For the time will come,* (saith the Apostle) *when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lusts shall they heap up to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears.* An itching Ear here, can signifie nothing so properly, as an Ear that loves *Novelty* and *Variety*; Because therefore our Church gives the people little that is New, in her *Prayers*, or *Reading the Scriptures*, but retains a *Form of sound words* in the one, and the plain word of God in the other; Hence it is that some people cannot endure our Service, but heap up to themselves *Teachers*, that instead of the *Praises, Prayers* and *Sermons* of God's immediate Appointment, will gratify

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gratify them every Meeting with a *New Prayers* without troubling them with such *Prayers* or *Sermons* as they think *Old*, which are incomparably better, only the *itching Ears* of the people, as the *Apostle* foretold, are pleased with the *Novelty* and *Variety* of the one, and disgust the *Repetition* of the other, as the *Israelites* did that of *Angels Food*, *Psal lxxviii. 25. Num. xxi. 5. and xi. 6.*

It is the Duty of all *Ministers*, and the business of the truly Conscientious to check and curb this Humour in the People; and notwithstanding all Discouragements, the *Ministers* of *Our Church*, instead of complying with them, have constantly reprov'd them for their Negligence and Levity, where they found them guilty. But as *Aaron*, to please the *Israelites*, made the *Golden Calf*, so some *Ministers* (tho' contrary to their own Principles) have changed *God's Institution* to please their people; and left out the constant and regular *Reading of God's Word*, because their people grew weary of it. But let all Men judge who behave themselves most like the *Ministers of Christ*; We, who keep to the *Reading God's Word*, according to *His own Institution*, whether the people will *hear* or *forbear*, or They that comply with them, and lay aside *God's Command* to oblige and gain them.

## C H A P. IV.

## Of Bodily Worship.

## SECT. I.

*What the Holy Scriptures prescribe concerning it.*

I. **T**He Fourth part of the publick Worship of God, or design of Religious Assemblies, is Visible, or Bodily Adoration; such amongst us are Uncovering the Head, Bowing, Kneeling, and other Outward Signs of Reverence and Submission; by which we openly acknowledge the Mercy, the Justice, and Power of God, and express the inward sense we have of these Attributes.

In Treating of this Head, I will keep my self to the same Method, as in the former, and consider, First, The Rules and Examples that the Scriptures afford us for the performance of this Duty. Secondly, Compare the Practice of Our Church with them. Thirdly, Examine the Dissenters Practice, and the Reasons they alledge for it.

1. As to the First of these, we find a positive Command of God for Bodily Worship in publick, Pjal. xcv. 6. *O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* The second Verse of this



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this *Psalm* plainly shews us that this is meant of *Publick Worship*: *Let us come before his presence with Thanksgiving.* And that this bowing or kneeling is to be interpreted, *literally*, not *figuratively*, appears from the same Verses, where *Singing, Thanksgiving* and *Psalms*, are all *litterally* to be understood; and there is no more reason for understanding *bowing* and *kneeling* in a figurative sence, than the other.

II. The same *Bodily Worship* is required by the *Second Commandment*, which forbids us to *bow down to a graven Image*, by which words we are Commanded to *bow down to God*; for it is confessed by all, and laid down as a Rule by the *Assembly's larger Catechism*, That the *Negative Commandments* includes in them the *contrary positive*; that is to say, when a Command forbids us any thing, it requires us to perform the Duty contrary to what is forbidden. As for Example: When the *First Commandment* forbids us to *have any other Gods before the Lord*, it requires us to *own and Worship Him for our only God*; and after the same manner all other Commands are to be Interpreted. By which Rule, when the *Second Commandment*, *Exod. xx. 5.* forbids us in these words, *Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them*, it requires us to practice the contrary Duties in our Addresses to God. To *bow down to Him and serve Him*, that is, to *Worship Him both with the Worship of our Bodies and Minds*: Therefore as he that either bows, or kneels, or uses any posture of Reverence to a *graven Image*, breaks the *second Commandment*; so doth he who on occasion of *publick Worship* either refuses or neglects to use some such posture to God. It being a contempt of God, and contrary to His Commands, to pray to Him, for instance, without some posture of Adoration to Him, when we can do it, as well as it is a sin to kneel to an Image, without praying to it, which the Papists pretend to do; the one is *Idolatry*, and the other

*Sacrilege:*

*Sacrilege*: For the reason why we are not to bow down to an *Idol*, is, because 'tis an Act of Worship due to God. And whether we give what is due to Him to an *Image*, or refuse to pay it to Himself, we are equally Robbers of God, we deny him his *Honour*, and are guilty of *Sacrilege*.

I wish all concerned may seriously consider, and amend their practice in this particular.

III. But the practice of Holy Men, and of the Church of God in Scripture, are the best Interpreters of God's Commands; and from them we may learn what he requires or approves in his *Worship*. Now through the whole *Old Testament*, we shall never find any one *sitting* at his Devotions: But on all occasions of *Worship*, especially in *Publick Assemblies*, the people of God stood, kneeled, bowed, or prostrated themselves. 'Tis said indeed, 2 *Sam.* vii. 8. That *King David then went and sat before the Lord*: But here the Original Word is capable of another signification, and may as well be translated, that he remained, stayed, or abode before the Lord; and accordingly it is thus translated in other places of Scripture, particularly *Gen.* xxii. 5. and xxiv. 55. and xxix. 19. 1 *Kings* xii. 9. This place therefore is no Exception against that practice which is so evident through the *Old Testament*, that Holy Men worshipped God with their *Bodies* as well as with their *Minds*.

IV. We shall find the same practised by our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* in the *New Testament*. Our *Saviour* undoubtedly is the best Example we can propose to our selves for the *Worship* of God, and we ought to imitate what he did and approved. Now if we consider the *Worship* he offered to his Father, we shall find him addressing himself to him with *bowing the Body*, with *Kneeling* and *Prostration*, as well as with *strong Cries and Tears*; so *Mat.* xxvi. 39. And he went a little further, and fell on his face,  
and

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and prayed, *O my Father, &c.* and *Luke xxii. 41. He kneeled down and prayed.* And as he paid this *Bodily Worship to God*, so he accepted the same from Men when he was on Earth: Thus the Wise Men Worshiped him in his Cradle, *Mat. ii. 11. When they saw the young Child and his Mother Mary, they fell down, &c.* Thus they that desired to be Cured by him, addressed themselves to him, *Mark v. 22. When he saw him, he fell at his feet, and besought, &c.* And after the same manner those who were cured by him returned him Thanks, *Luke xvii. 16.* Thus his beloved *Mary* came into his presence, *John xi. 32. And Mat. xxvii. 9. They told him by the feet and Worshiped him.* Our Saviour looked on this *Bodily Worship* to be so indispensably his due, that he accepted of it from the very Devils, and they durst not forbear to pay it to him, *Mark iii. 11. And unclean Spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, Thou art the Son of God.* And thus the very Heathen, as well as his Disciples, approached him, even whilst he was in his State of Humiliation.

And that we may not be tempted to think, that our Saviour admitted this *Bodily Worship* to be paid him only whilst he was *Bodily* present, we may observe *St. Stephen* presents his prayer with the same posture, *Acts, vii. 60. He kneeled down and cryed with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

V. The Scriptures represent to us the First Christians thus glorifying God with their Bodies, (as *St. Paul* expressly commands us, *1 Cor. vi. 20*) in the Publick Assemblies, as we may learn from *1 Cor. xiv. 23.* where the Apostle speaking of a Heathen coming into the Assembly of Christians, and being convinced, addeth, and so falling down on his face he will Worship God. If it had not been the custom for Christians to do thus, it would never have been expected from a Heathen, or reckoned an Argument of his Conviction. If the Church Triumphant in Hea-

ven may be allowed a fit Pattern to us of what is decent in the *Worship of God*, we find them, as they are represented in the Vision, paying this *Bodily Worship to God*, *Rev. vii. 11.* And all the *Angels stood about the Throne*, and about the *Elders*, and about the *Beasts*, and fell on their faces before the *Throne*, and *Worshipped God*, so *Chap. iv. 10.* and *Chap. xix 4.* And the same we find practised by the Church on *Barth, Acts xxi. 5.* where *St. Paul*, and the Church of *Tyre kneeled down on the Shore and prayed.* After the same manner he took his leave of the *Elders of Ephesus, Acts. xx. 36.* He *kneeled down and prayed with them all.* So constantly are *Bodily Worship* and *Prayer* joyned together, that *bowing the knee*, sometimes signifies, *Prayer*, *Eph. iii. 14.* For this cause I bow my knees unto the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

VI. The Scriptures represent this *Bodily Worship* as the most proper external Act of *Adoration*: If we look into the Scriptures we shall not find *Praying, Praising, Reading the Scriptures*, or *Administring the Sacraments*, termed *Worship*; they are indeed *Duties* which we are oblig'd to perform to the Honour of God, but not immediate direct Acts of *Worship*, properly so called: For *Worship* is properly the subjection of our minds to God; and that is a proper Act of *External Worship*, which directly signifies this subjection or submission of our minds; But *Prayer* signifies our desires of good things from God, and only indirectly our subjection to him; *Praises* immediately signify the sense we have of God's Excellencies, and only by consequence our submission; *Reading the Scriptures* is a means of *Instruction*, and tends to bring us to submit to God, but does not directly express it; And the *Sacraments* primarily signify God's grace to us rather than our submission to Him. All these may in a large sense, upon very good grounds, be look'd upon as parts of *Worship*, because they do imply such submission; but *bending or bowing the Body* is that which

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which is properly in Scripture called *Worship*, as signifying immediately and naturally the *bending or submission* of our Souls, and nothing else.

In the *Old Testament* the words rendered *Worship*, signify properly and originally to *bow down or prostrate the Body*. This is the proper signification of *שָׁגַד* and of *סָבַח* the latter of which in the *Second Commandment* is render'd to *bow down*, and very often when the Original has *they bowed down themselves*, the Translators render it *they worshiped*. So *Psal. xcvi. 9.* and *Jer. i. 16.* *And worshiped the work of their own hands.* In the Original 'tis *They bowed themselves down to the Work*, &c. *Gen. xxiv. 52.* *He worshiped the Lord bowing himself to the Earth.* The Original has no more but *He bowed himself to the Earth to the Lord*, so *Psal. xcv. 6.* And the same holds generally through the whole *Old Testament*, from whence it follows that in the opinion of our Translators, to *bow ones self to the Earth*, is that proper *Act* which they call *Worship*. And hence the whole *Worship of God* is signified by *bowing before him*, *Micah. vi. 6.* *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the High God?* that is, *How shall I worship him acceptably?*

As to the *New Testament*, the Word generally there rendered *Worship*, properly signifies a *Bodily Action* *σέβω* is Originally to pay Homage by a kiss, as we now kiss the *King's Hand*, which usually was done *kneeling*; And hence *Kneeling* and *Worshipping* signify the same thing in the *New Testament*, and the one is put for the other. Thus *Matt. viii. 2.* *There came a Leper and Worshiped him.* The same person is said (*Mark i. 40.*) to come *beseeking him and kneeling to him.* Of the *Canaaniish Woman* it is said (*Matt. xv. 25.*) *That She came and Worshiped him.* And *Mark* says (*Chap. vii. 25.*) *She came and fell at his feet.* *Luke* says of the Man among the Tombs, that *he fell down before him* (*Chap. viii. 28.*) *Mark,*  
that

that *He Worshiped him*, (*Chap. v. 6.*) Of *Fairus*, *Mark* and *Luke* say, that *He fell down at his feet*. *Matthew*, that *He Worshiped him*. *Luke* viii. 40. *Mark* v. 22. *Math.* ix. 18. So promiscuously do the Evangelists use the words *Kneeling*, or *Falling down* and *Worshipping*, to signify the same thing. Whence we may learn that when any is said to *worship* Christ visibly; by it is meant they *kneeled to him*. And when we are Commanded to *Worship* God in the Congregation, the meaning is, that we are required to express the submission of our minds by *bowing our selves*, or *kneeling unto him*. Hence the very Soldiers, that in derision *bowed their knees to Christ*; are said to *worship* him, *Mark* xv. 19. And *St. John*, *Rev.* xxii. 8. when he would *worship* the Angel; *fell before his feet*, to which the Angel replied, *See thou do it not — Worship God*: From which Text it clearly follows; that *falling down* is an Act of *Worship*, and that we are Commanded by the Mouth of an Angel to pay it to God.

VII. We find in Scripture some Act of this *Bodily worship* accompanying every Religious performance: Thus Prayers are generally offered with kneeling; and that so constantly (as is observed before) that to *bow the knee*, in Scripture-Language, is to *pray*. Thus Praises, Thanksgivings, and Confessions of Faith, are offered standing, *1 King.* viii. 14. And the King turned his face about, and blessed all the Congregation of Israel (and all the Congregation of Israel stood) and he said, *Blessed be the Lord*, &c. the same posture is observed, *Verf.* 55. *2 Chron.* xx. 19. And the Levites — stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice, *2 Chron.* xxix. 26. *Neb.* x. 40. And this was not a voluntary Act, but imposed on the people, as appears from *Neb.* ix. 5. Then the Levites — said, *stand up and bless the Lord your God*, &c. In conformity to which; the Saints and Angels in Heaven are represented to us thus praising God, *Rev.* vii. 9. They



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9. They stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb --- and cried with a loud Voice, saying, Salvation, &c. At Reading the Holy Scriptures, both Reader and People used the same posture, as appears from *Neb. viii. 4. 5.* And Ezra the Scribe stood on a Pulpit of Wood --- And Ezra opened the Book, and all the People stood up. And Chap. ix. 3. And they stood up in their place, and read in the Book: Which our Saviour likewise observed, *Luke iv. 16.*

Lastly, They offered their Sacrifices with Bodily Adoration, *2 Chron. xxix. 27.* And when the Burnt Offerings began, the Song of the Lord began also --- And all the Congregation worshiped, and the Singers sang, and the Trumpets sounded; and all this continued until the Burnt Offering was finished. The word, as was observed, here rendred *worshiped*, signifies literally *they bowed themselves down*, and the meaning is, They continued prostrate, or kneeling, whilst the Burnt Offering was offered. Thus in every Religious Performance, the Scripture has taken particular notice and Recorded to us, with what Acts of *Bodily Worship* it was offered up to God.

**SECT. 2.**

**The Practice of Our Church in  
Bodily Worship.**

**L**ET us in the next place compare our own Practice with this Representation, and see how we perform this part of *Visible Worship* in Our Church.

I. First then, when we come into the *Publick Assemblies*; we believe our selves to come into *Christ's* presence; because he has promised *Mat. xviii. 21.* Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them: And therefore in Obedience to the Commands of God in Scripture, 'Tis our Custom to lift up our hearts to Him in Prayer

and bow our *Bodies* before Him: This bowing our *Bodies* when we come into the Assembly of Christians met together in *Christ's* Name, and for his Service, tho' it be not enjoined by any Constitution of our Church, is generally practis'd by good people, as very decent in it self, and edifying to others. Our bowing our *Bodies* therefore at our coming into a Christian Assembly for Worship, is only to pay that *Bodily Worship* to God that He requires from us when we come into his peculiar presence, which presence He has promised in such Assemblies. Some indeed are so weak as to term our thus *worshipping* God, a *bowing to the Altar*: whereas our Church expressly declaring against any *Adoration* to be paid to the Consecrated *Bread and Wine*, does much more declare against doing it to the *Altar*.

II. *Uncovering the Head* is a Mark of Respect among us; and therefore we continue Uncovered whilst the Assembly lasts; that is, whilst we are in *Christ's* presence. The custom of the Eastern Church was to *Uncover their Feet* in the presence of God; so *Moses* and *Joshua* were commanded to do; (to which *Solomon* alludes, *Eccles. v. 1.*) This was easily practised with them, because they wore nothing on their Feet but loose Shoes and Sandals, which were readily slipped off; And this continued till our Saviour's time, as appears by their washing their Feet when they came into Houses, *Luke vii. 44.* *Uncovering the Head* is the same common mark of respect with us now, as *Uncovering the Feet* was with them in their time; and this *Uncovering the Feet* being neither practicable with us, nor any note of respect among us, but rather the contrary, Our Church has required us instead of it, to *Uncover our Heads*, *Can. vii.*

For the justification of this practice, give me leave to digress so far as to explain one passage in the New Testament, which seems to require that a Man should have his *Head uncovered* in the presence of God,

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God, not as a note of respect, but of Priviledge; 1 Cor. xi. 7. *For a Man indeed ought not to cover his Head, forasmuch as he is the Image and Glory of God; but the Woman is the Glory of the Man.* Which passage does not primarily relate to the covering the Head, but the Face, by a Vail, according to the Custom of the Eastern Countries: and this *covering the Face*, was a note of Respect, as the contrary was a note of Priviledge: So we find that when Rebecca was to appear before her Husband (Gen. xxiv. 65.) *She took a Vail and covered her self.* So (Exod. iii. 6.) *Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God;* and *Elijah wrapped his face in his Mantle when he went out to meet God,* 1 Kings xix. 13. On the same Account the Seraphims cover their faces with their wings, Is. vi. 2. 'Tis therefore a peculiar Priviledge and favour to be allowed to appear before God *uncover'd*, and it is reckon'd as such, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *but we all with open face beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, &c.* Those that were out of Favour might not appear bare-faced before their Prince, but with their *Heads covered*, as Haman was when the King signified his displeasure against him. Ester vii. 8. Now for the understanding of the before cited place, we must consider that *Man* being the *Image and Glory of God*, is allowed to take this Confidence before God, which is denied to *women*: For since God was pleased to make *Man* his *Image and Glory*, it is not fit that this his *Glory* should be covered before him: but on the other hand, it is fit that *Man's Glory*, which is *Woman*, should be covered before God. This I conceive is the full meaning of this place, and has no relation to the manner of *uncovering of the Head* in use with us now; which is only a mark of civil respect, and that peculiar to Men, and not to Women. But however being an honour paid to Men, there is no reason why it should not be paid to God: On the contrary it seems to be required by the Apostles ge-

neral Injunction, *Let all things be done decently.* And it is one of the Articles of our Church, *That the Church has power to order Rites and Ceremonies*; that is, to determine what particular things come under the Apostles general word of *Decency*.

3. We stand up at our *Praisings, Thanksgivings and Confessions of Faith*, in Conformity to the Examples of Holy Scripture.

4. At our *Confessions of Sin*, and at our *Prayers*, we present our selves before God on our *knees*, by order of our Church, according to the Example of our Saviour, and the Church of God.

III. We Celebrate the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ in a *worshipping* posture. I know that many except against this. It would engage me in a longer discourse to examine it fully; perhaps God may hereafter give me an Opportunity to discuss it at large, at present I shall only hint at the Scripture-Grounds we have for it, And that, first by the following deduction.

*The Author's Intention is not to assert that the Scriptures require Kneeling at the Lord's Supper, but to shew that it is not contrary to the Institution of Christ, or Practice of the Apostles, who compare our receiving it with the Jews partaking of their Altar, to which they approached with Adoration.*

1. The Altar was of Old the Lord's Table, from whence his Attendance were fed, *Mal. i. 7. Ye offer polluted Bread upon mine Altar, and ye say, wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The Table of the Lord is contemptible.*

2. On this account the Israelites came to the Altar, and worshiped before it, as being God's Table, on which the Sacrifice was presented, as his Meat, of which they were permitted to partake: So *2 Chron. vi. 12. And he stood before the Altar of the Lord — Vers. 13. And kneeled down on his knees. And 1 Kings viii. 54.*

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viii. 54. *He arose from before the Altar, from kneeling on his knees.* Nor can it be said; That this kneeling of Solomon was only because he offered up a Prayer at that time, and that therefore he was in a praying posture; for undoubtedly it was the Duty of all that were present at any Sacrifice, to offer up prayers to God with the Sacrifice: And accordingly we find it commanded, 2 Kings xviii. 22. *Ye shall worship before this Altar in Jerusalem;* literally, *Ye shall bow down your selves.*

3. The Communion-Table is called the *Lord's-Table*, 1 Cor. x. 21.

4. The *Israelites* partaking of the *Altar* is proposed as an Example for our partaking of the *Lord's-Table*, 1 Cor. x. 16. *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ* — vers. 18. *Behold Israel after the Flesh: Are not they which eat of the Sacrifices partakers of the Altar?*

5. In allusion to this Religious Eating with *Sodily Worship*, it is Propheesied of our Saviour, Psal. xxii. 29. *All they that be fat upon Earth* (that is, the favoured and happy Servants of God here; called in vers. 26. *The meek*) *shall eat and worship.*

Since then the Scripture sets forth to us a Religious Eating at the *Lord's-Table* with *Worship*, and the *Holy Communion* is such an Eating at his *Table*, it follows that the Scripture Warrants our *Worshipping* when we Eat.

2. We are Commanded in Scripture to receive the *Holy Eucharist* *In remembrance of Christ's death*, and by it we shew his death till he come. The same Scriptures Command us to *Worship* our Saviour: *For he is the Lord, and worship thou him.* Psal. xlv. 11. If ever then we are to *Worship* our Saviour, it is certainly when we come to him in the nearest approaches that we are capable of in this World, and with

the highest sense of Gratitude that our Souls can admit of; to remember and adore him for the greatest Act of love that could be extended towards us, even laying down his Life for us, and to partake of the benefits thereof by feeding on him. If it be not our Duty to *Worship him with our Bodies*, as well as our Minds, on this occasion, it is hard to say when we are obliged to do it.

This consideration prevail'd with the Protestant Church of *Poland*, to oblige all their Members to receive *kneeling* or *standing*, in Opposition to the *Socinians*, who refused to pay any Worship to our Saviour; and therefore Celebrated his Supper *sitting*. The Words of their General Synod are these. (*Corpus Confession. p. 236.*) *Quod attinet ad Cereemonias, &c.*

“ As to the Ceremonies of the Lord's-Supper, the  
 “ Decree some time ago discuss'd in the Synod of *Sandomir*, and the Conclusion made and repeated in  
 “ the General Synod of *Cracow* and *Patrikow*, is also  
 “ approved in this Session of the Synod of *Uladislaw*,  
 “ vizt. That sitting at the Lord's-Table shall not  
 “ be used in any of the Churches of *Poland* or *Lithuania*, &c. of our Communion: For this Ceremony (tho' indifferent as others are) is not used  
 “ by the Christian and Reformed Churches; and is  
 “ proper to the Infidel *Arrians* only, who place themselves in an equal Throne with the Lord. Since  
 “ then *sitting* has crept into some of our Churches,  
 “ chiefly by the occasion and countenance of those  
 “ who have miserably fallen from us, and denied the  
 “ Lord that bought us, We intreat and exhort all  
 “ those Congregations. and our Brethren in the  
 “ Lord, that they would change *sitting* into the Ceremonies used by us Protestants in all the Reformed Churches of *Europe*, even that the Lord's Supper may be administred to the Communicants  
 “ standing or kneeling (with a protestation against  
 “ *Bread-Worship* used by the Papists) both which  
 “ Rites



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Rites (as they have been hitherto used in some Churches) we leave free, and approve; without blaming or giving offence to those who use either. This Synod was held June 19. 1583.

The Synod of Petrikow above-mentioned (held June 1. 2. 3. 1578. *pa.* 234.) expresses it self in these words. "Because these Traiterous Fugitives from us to *Arianism*, who change all things in the Church, pretending to imitate Christ without discretion, were the first Authors amongst us of sitting at the Lord's-Table, contrary to the Rites used in all the Reformed Churches through Europe. Therefore we reject this Ceremony, as proper to them who treat as well Christ as his Sacraments irreverently, as indecent and irreligious, and very offensive to well meaning people.

It ought to be observed, that this Church reckons sitting a Ceremony; and a Ceremony of an *ill* signification and Original; and not used by any Protestant Church in their time.

IV. But I find most people acknowledge the reasonableness of this, and grant if it were left to us how we would Receive, that we ought to do it with Adoration; but, say they, *Obedience is better then Sacrifice*; we are Commanded to do what Christ did, and he Instituted, and his Disciples received it, in a *Table posture*, and therefore so ought we. Notwithstanding the Scriptures, Reason and Decency seem to recommend another posture to us.

Now to this Argument, which is the only one I find brought from Scripture, and which seems to prevail with most. I answer,

1. That we are not required, nor is it convenient to imitate all that Christ did. Neither the time, nor the number of Receivers, nor the posture being obligatory to us, as appears from St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 23. who having occasion to mention what he received of the Lord concerning this Sacrament, mentions only

our Saviour's taking Bread, giving thanks, and breaking it, and then saying, take eat, This is my Body. &c. without the circumstances of the number of Receivers, his posture, or being at Supper. Nay, that we may not think that this had any relation to a common Supper, or the circumstances of it, he observes that *Supper was done when he took the Cup*. Our Saviour's posture therefore, whatever it was, is no wise obligatory to us, it not being any part of what St. Paul professes to have received from Christ concerning this Sacrament.

2. I have already proved that Religious Eating was accompanied with Bodily Worship, and therefore if it were granted that we were obliged to receive this Sacrament in a *Table posture* from the example of our Saviour, yet it would not follow that we should not receive it *kneeling*. 'Tis certain our Saviour did not sit, but lie at Table when he did eat his usual Meals. Suppose then he had obliged us to his posture of Eating, we ought to lie as he did, but none assert the necessity of our doing so, or practice this way. Since then all Parties change it, sure we do better that change it into the Religious way of Eating, recommended to us in Scriptures, with Adoration, then others that change our Saviour's way into sitting, the common way of our Eating.

3. We have this further to say for our practice, That our Saviour was not at a common Supper when he Instituted this Sacrament, but at the Passover, which was a Sacramental Eating, and had a peculiar posture prescribed for it, *Exod. 12. 11.* and tho' some think (but without warrant from Scripture) that the Jews did not observe this, yet it is owned they observed another, which differed from the common posture of Eating, and was reckoned Religious: However 'tis Evident that our Saviour performed this Eating with several Religious Ceremonies that were not in the first Institution. Such is that we find, *Lk. xxii.*

17. And

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17. *And He took the Cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among your selves.* This Cup is different from the Sacramental Cup, which is Instituted *vers. 20.* and therefore if we would imitate Christ, we ought to Eat the *Lord's-Supper* in a way peculiar to it self, and different from our common Meals.

4. *But Fourthly,* The full Answer to the Argument is, That it goes on a false Supposition that our Saviour instituted this Sacrament in the common posture of Eating; which no wise appears in Scripture, neither can it be inferred from any thing said or intimated by the Evangelists, or *St. Paul*, but rather the contrary. It is true, whilst the Disciples were Eating, *He took the Bread*, but after that *He gave thanks and blessed it*, and then *He brake it*, and *gave it to them*; and it is not to be supposed that the Disciples continued Eating, whilst our Saviour was giving thanks and blessing; that is, praying. Our Saviour therefore, or his Disciples, were not Eating, but giving thanks and praying, whilst this Sacrament was Instituted; and therefore it was proper to be done (and in probability was done by our Saviour) in a Thanksgiving and Praying posture; neither was there any necessity to take notice of this change of posture, since the change of the Action, from *Eating* to *Thanksgiving* and *Blessing*, sufficiently signifies and infers it. There is no Notice taken of our Saviour's rising at all from the Table, by any of the three *Evangelists* that deliver to us the Institution of the Sacrament; and yet it is plain from *John xiii. 4.* that he did rise from that Supper, and *washed his Disciples Feet*, and *sat down again, vers. 12.* and so he might rise to bless and distribute the Holy Sacrament: And therefore we have no assurance from Scripture that our Saviour Instituted this Sacrament in a common Table-posture, rather the contrary seems probable. So that he has left us at Liberty to follow the general Rules of Decency and

and Reason, and what the Scriptures represent to us as fit, and practised in the like cases.

Lastly, We find the *Apostle* severely reprov-  
ing the *Corinthians*, for their Irreverence in *Receiving*  
*this Sacrament*; and threatening them with *Damna-*  
*tion*, for not *discerning the Lord's Body*; that is, for  
receiving it as their *common Food*, without distin-  
guishing between them by a Reverend and Religious  
Receiving it: And sure it is but a due distinction be-  
tween *It* and our *common Food*, to approach the  
*Lord's Table* with as much Reverence as the Jews did  
their *Altar*, at which they never sat down.

Upon the whole, I think we do nothing in this, or  
any other sacred Action, as to *Bodily Worship*, but  
what is warranted and grounded on the *Holy Scrip-*  
*tures*: and particularly as to what we do at the *Ho-*  
*ly Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper*, it is as unjust to  
suspect or accuse us of *Worshipping the Lord's-Ta-*  
*ble*, or the Elements of *Bread and Wine*, because we  
receive them *kneeling*, as it were to accuse the Jews  
of *Worshipping their Altar or Sacrifices*, because they  
*Worshipped* before them, as God commanded them  
to do, 2 *Kings* xviii. 22. I beseech God to give us  
true Submission and Humility of Heart; for the  
Outward Expressions of these Inward Dispositions of  
Mind, which our Church has appointed by *Bodily*  
*worship*, and certainly such as God has approved, and  
Holy Men have practised in Scripture.

### SECT. 3.

#### *The Practice of the Dissenters in Bodily Worship.*

I. **A**Nd now, I come to you, my Friends, who  
Dissent from Us, to consider how You per-  
form *This part of God's Worship*, and to compare Your  
Principles and Practice with what I have represent-  
ed from the *Holy Scriptures*.

And

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And first as to Your Principles : I need not tell You, That you do not allow Bodily Adoration to be any part of God's Worship, which you cannot but discern to be plainly contrary to the *Holy Scriptures*, that make it the most proper peculiar Act thereof, as I have shewed before, Chap. IV. Sect. 1. N<sup>o</sup>. 1. 2. 3. In *Your Confession of Faith*, Chap. 21. Prayer, Reading, Scriptures, &c. Singing Psalms, Administration of the Sacraments, are reckon'd up as parts of Religious Worship, but not a word concerning the Worship of the *Body*. Your *Directory* doth not only leave it out, but excludes it, by requiring all to enter the Assembly, and so take their Seats and Places without Adoration or bowing themselves towards one Place or other, that is, without bowing themselves at all ; A Rule directly opposite to Natural Reason, as well as to the Commands of God, and to the Examples of his Saints : and 'tis unconceivable how it should be laid down by a Society of Men that professed to believe Christ peculiarly present in their Assemblies ; which yet the Authors of your *Directory* profess to do in that very place where they forbid all Adoration. Let us then, I pray you, compare their Rule with God's Word ; You have the Bible in your hands, and you look upon it to be your Priviledge to use it : The Scriptures say, *O come, let us worship, let us bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* Your *Directory* says, *Let us enter the Assembly without Adoration or bowing :* Where notwithstanding it allows that we in a *special manner appear in God's presence*. Surely you cannot but see this is not only to lay aside, but to contradict the Rules of Scripture.

II. Your *Practice* is conformable to your *Principles* : For,

1. At your Thanksgivings or Praises, you neither bow nor stand up.

2. Whereas We, and the Churches of God in all Ages,

Ages, have used to stand up at the solemn Confessions of Faith, you have cast out of your Religious Assemblies not only *this Act of Worship*, but the *Confessions of Faith themselves*; so material a part of the Service of God, as appears from *Rom. x. 9. 10.* *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine Heart that God hath raised Him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the Heart Man believes unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto salvation.* To profess solemnly that we expect no Happiness but from the good pleasure of God, and that we freely acquiesce in his Provisions for us, is no small Evidence of the submission of our Minds to God; and upon that account may be reckoned an Instance of External Worship, & accordingly many of the Psalms contain such Confessions.

3. You sit generally at your Publick Prayers.

4. At the Holy Sacrament you sit, not only whilst you Receive, but likewise at the Thanksgiving and Blessing before; and your *Directory* imposes this posture on Communicants, tho' contrary to *Holy Scripture*, in respect of that part that concerns the Prayer and Thanksgiving; and without any Command, or so much as Example from Scripture, in respect of the sitting at the time of Receiving.

5. Too many of your persuasion condemn us, who conform to *God's Word* in these particulars, as guilty of *Superstition*, and endeavour to render our Conformity ridiculous; not being content to lay aside the *Commands of God themselves*, but endeavouring likewise to condemn and scoff at the Observation of them in *Us*.

In short, I entreat you to consider, That you have not any one Visible Act of Adoration amongst you in your Assemblies, except we reckon in this Number, That your Men *Uncover their Heads* at Prayer; and yet even this is not required by your *Directory*.

III. And now let me a while Examine calmly with you,



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you, the Pretences I have met with for laying aside this part of *God's Worship*; for it is not probable that any would banish *Adoration* out of their *Assemblies*, and alledge no Reason for their doing so.

1. First therefore, I find that place of *Scripture* produced to this purpose, *John iv, 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.* Some think that all *Bodily Worship* is here forbidden, and that only the *Worship* of the *Spirit* or *Mind* is required of us under the *Gospel*: Upon this, some have declared against all *Churches*, or seporate places for *Worship*; Others against all *Bodily Worship*; Others against all *Sacraments*; Others against all *Vocal Prayers*, *Praises*, and *Thanksgivings*; And even in the *Apostle's* time, some were against all *Visible Assemblies*. And indeed, if we understand this place as some do, that all *Bodily Worship* is excluded by it, and that it is sufficient to *Worship God* in our *Spirits* or *Minds* only, I do not see but all these are in the right; and those who pretend to be above *Ordinances*, and *worship God no-where*, are most conformable to this *Rule*; and next to them, the silent Meetings of the *Quakers*, without *Sacraments*, without *Vocal Prayers* or *Praises*, are the most *spiritual service*. For if other *Dissenters* think *Bodily Worship*, such as *Bowing*, *Kneeling*, &c. Unlawful or Unnecessary; because they are *Acts* of the *Body*, and unfit on that account to be offered to *God*, who is a *Spirit*, why may not the *Quakers* omit the *Sacraments*, and the words of the *Mouth*, which are *Outward Things* as well as the other? Nay, why should not *Outward Teaching* or *Preaching* cease, Since the *spirit* is a sufficient Teacher and has promised us, *Heb. viii. 10. I will put my Laws into their Minds, and write them in their Hearts*—*Vers. 11. And they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, &c.* The Principle and Reasoning is the same in all these, and will justify the *Silent Meetings*, of the *Quakers*,  
nay,

may, the Extravagance of Those that pretend to be *above all Ordinances*, as well as the Irreverence of other *Dissenters*.

But we ought to interpret Scripture so as one place may not contradict another; and since the Holy Scriptures shew us, that God requires our *Vocal Prayers and Praises*, our *Visible Sacraments and Adoration*, we ought not to interpret *worshipping in the Spirit* so as to exclude these, but rather conclude that they may be offered up to God in such a manner as to become proper for *spiritual worship*, or God would never have required them.

When therefore our Saviour represents the *Worship* He taught the World, as a *Worship in Spirit and Truth*, his meaning doubtless is not to exempt us from *worshipping his Father* with our *Bodies*, whereof He Himself has given us an Example; but to teach us, That the *Outward Acts of Worship* that we pay to God, are only Acceptable to Him, when they proceed from, and are accompanied with a hearty *submission of our Souls*; and that every Act is more or less Acceptable, as it has more or less of our Hearts and Affections in it: But that Circumstances of place and the like, give us no Advantage, and are of no value towards making our *Worship* Acceptable.

This meaning of the words directly answers our Saviour's design, which was to shew the *Samaritan Woman* that the time was coming that the *Worship* offered to God under the *Gospel* would be nothing more acceptable for being offered at *Jerusalem*, or *Mount-Gerezim*, or any other place; But the Heart being right, all places were alike. Which was directly contrary to the *Jewish Law*, that allowed no *Sacrifice or Oblation* to be acceptable to God, that was not offered at the *Temple*, and consequently their *Worship* derived its acceptance from the place, and not from the Heart alone of him that offered it.

We affirm therefore, as our Saviour has here taught

taught us, that it is only from the *Heart*, or *Spirit*, that our *Worship* becomes acceptable to God, and that the time or place where it is offered contributes nothing to our acceptance: But that in whatever place, at whatever time, in whatsoever posture we offer up our *Spirits* and *Hearts* to God, we are accepted by him.

But then we say likewise, a Man who neglects the Assemblies of Christians, cannot have a good *Heart* towards God, because he breaks his Command; that such as do not take care to provide a convenient and decent place, and set it apart for Christians to meet, and to perform God's *Worship* in, cannot have a value for it; that such as neglect the *Holy Sacraments*, want Faith in His promises, as well as Obedience to His Commands; and that those who neglect to *Worship* him with their *Body*, and to pay outward Reverence and Adoration when they come into his presence, must want inward submission of their minds, because they do not approach as he requires. If a Man truly *Worship* God in his *Spirit*, it will oblige him, if able, to perform these outward Acts; and if he be not able, God doth not require them.

It is in this, as in Faith, *Jam. ii. 18.* *A Man may say, Thou hast Faith, and I have Works: shew me thy Faith without thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works.* After the same manner a Man may say, *Thou worships God inwardly in Heart and Spirit, and I Worship him outwardly, and in the face of the Church with my Body. Shew me thy inward Worship without bowing, kneeling, or other Bodily Act of Worship, and I will shew thee my inward Worship, and dread of Gods Majesty by the worship of my Body.*

From all which it is manifest, that our *Obligation to worship* God in *Spirit* and *Truth*, doth no more exclude *Bodily Worship*, then *Faith* does exclude *Works*.

2. The second pretence I have heard for banishing of *Bodily Adoration* is much like the first. It is alledged, *That God has no value for it; and that if our Hearts are humble and right with God, no matter whether we signify it by outward acts of Adoration or no.*

But to this I answer,

1. That God himself is the best Judge of what befits His Majesty, and 'tis a sure sign that He valueth a thing when he requires it; since therefore he has Commanded us to render him this *Bodily Worship*, for us to alledge, *That He doth not value it*, is too like setting up our own Wisdom above His.

2. The Words of our *Prayers*, or *Praises*, and all the *Fruits of our Lips*, are outward things, as well as the gestures of our *Bodies*, and God values them as little as our prostrating our *Bodies* before him, when the *Heart* goes not along with them, as appears from *Is. i.* where he shews his Abhorrence, not only of *Sacrifices*, *Feasts*, and *spreading forth hands*, but likewise of *Prayers*, *vers. 4.* And *Mark vii. 6.* *This people honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me, howbeit in vain do they worship me, &c.* Yet to throw *Vocal Prayers* and *Praises* out of the service of God, were absolutely to destroy His *Visible Worship*; and after the same manner to throw out all Outward signs of Reverence, such as *kneeling*, &c. is a fair step towards it. For the same God that has sworn, *That every Tongue shall confess unto him*, has likewise sworn, *That every knee shall bow unto him*, *Rom. xiv. 11.* Both therefore are alike required in the *Worship of God*, and both alike insignificant when separated from the sincere concurrence of our *Hearts*. When the *Meditations of our Hearts* go along with the words of our Mouths, they are acceptable to God; and when the submission of our Souls goes along with the *worship of our Bodies*, it is grateful to him, and valuable in his sight, as all other Acts of Obedience are.

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3. Tho' *Bodily worship* in it self were a small thing, yet the omission of it may be a great and Crying Sin, and a great Contempt of Almighty God. Thus eating the *forbidden Fruit* was in it self a very considerable Outward Action, and yet being *forbidden*, it was the Ruine of all Mankind. Thus the washing a Man with Water, *In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, is in it self no great matter, yet the willful omission of it is acknowledged by Most to be *Damnable*. Thus *kneeling*, or *standing* at our *Prayer*, is but a Circumstance, yet since God has required it, and *Holy Men* recommended it by their Example, to omit it willfully may be a great sin, and render our best meant *Prayers* ineffectual. Much more must it be sinful to condemn, or mock at those who practice it according to God's Institution.

4. As small a value as you think God has for Outward performances, yet it is plain, that you lay great weight upon the doing, or not doing of them. In cases of necessity we think they may be lawfully omitted; but you are Taught that in no cases they may be lawfully practised. You are Taught rather to stay at Home, and not to *worship God* at all *Publickly*, than to conform in Outward Gestures, or Circumstances. You are advised rather to abstain all your lives from the *Lord's Supper* than receive it *Kneeling*. Now if you think God does hate them so much, upon supposition that he has not required them, and accounts them a polluting of his Ordinance. How must it displease Him to omit them, if it appears that He has Commanded them, as I think I have made sufficiently plain?

5. I intreat you, my Friends, to consider, that whatever *Bodily worship* be in it self, yet to thro' it out of our Publick Assemblies is of fatal consequence, since it doth in a great measure defeat the design of them. The great design of *publick worship* is, *first*, to signify, & testify to the world the sense & belief we have of the Being

*Power and Providences of God, To declare his Name to our Brethren, and in the midst of the Church to sing Praise unto him, Heb. ii. 12. And Secondly, to be a means to boget, stir up, and preserve this Sense and Belief in one another. Heb. x. 25. To both these ends, Bodily and External worship do very much contribute; and 'tis hardly possible to attain either of them without it. For we cannot see into one anothers Hearts, and therefore we must signify our Sense and Belief of God in the Publick Assemblies, either by Words or Actions, and if possible, by such as are peculiarly appointed by God to this purpose. But in your Meetings there is no Obligation on any one to signify his Concurrence with the Congregation in any Ordinary Act of worship, either by Word or Gesture, and therefore this end of Publick Assemblies is utterly defeated by you. Your Directory does not require, or allow the People so much as to signify their assent by adding an Amen to the Prayers or Thanksgivings there offered: But on the contrary, you ridicule those that practice it pursuant to the Directions and Examples in Scripture: And as to Gestures, such as kneeling, standing, or bowing the Body, &c. you condemn them all as Relicks of Idolatry, or superstition. There remains therefore in your Assemblies nothing whereby the people may testify their Belief, or assent to what they hear, which was one design of the Meeting. Thus by turning all Bodily worship out of your Assemblies, you have made void this great end of them, and left no visible distinction whereby any one may signify whether he assents to the Worship that is offered, or dissents from it. The whole Assembly being to one another meer Spectators and Hearers, not Joint-Worshippers.*

*As to the other end of Publick worship, which is to keep alive, and stir up our affections; you cannot but own that the omission of this outward worship is a great hindrance to it. For it must needs be a great*  
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check to *Devotion* to see a Man come into the presence of God in a *Christian Assembly*, with less Reverence, or shew of respect, than into the presence of an Ordinary Superior; and behave himself less civilly there, than he would do in a Court of Justice. And let people pretend what they will, That can never be suitable worship to God, which would be rudeness to a Judge. And therefore the Quakers act much more reasonably, who refuse to take off their Hats, or pay *Bodily worship* to Men, than other Dissenters, who pay it to Men, and refuse it to God. For to do so must Naturally tend to extinguish the awe and sense we ought to have of His Majesty, and the Belief of his peculiar presence in our *Assemblies*, and it is much to be feared that this proceeds too often from the want of such awe.

6. To conclude, There is a Language of Gestures rather more significant and moving than that of the Tongue; and he must have a peculiar make of Mind, that is not more awakened and affected by seeing a whole Congregation on their Knees, with their Hands and Eyes lift up to Heaven; than to see them sitting or leaning, whilst their Petitions are offering up to God. Words therefore and Gestures being only different parts of the Language whereby we express and communicate our Thoughts and Affections to one another, and both being Recommended to us by Nature, and Commanded by Scripture, to be used in the *Worship of God*, he who lays aside Gestures does sin against the Commandment of God. as well as he that lays aside Words. I heartily wish *You* and all Dissenters, wou'd consider this; which if you did, I assure my self you wou'd perceive this to be a matter of some Moment, and neither condemn our *Bodily Adorations*; nor continue your own (what I must call) Irreverence.

3. But *Thirdly*, Some alledge, for their omitting this part of God's worship, That they do not condemn

*Bodily Adoration in his Service; but that to stand up and kneel in the Congregation is so troublesome to them, that they judge they are better omitted.*

To which I Answer, That I verily believe that these persons do give the true Reason of this Practice; For, as it has been shewed before, 'twas of old the Reason of people's Neglecting God's Service, and Matter of their Complaint against it, That *it was a weariness*, Mal. i. 13. But sure 'tis no less a sin to lay aside the *Commandments of God* for our *Ease*, than to change them for the *Traditions of Men*. 'Tis an Effect of our Natural Corruption, to desire to serve God with that which *costs us nothing*, and without trouble; and most are willing to save their Pains, as well as their Money, in his Service. But this is a certain sign that they have little Heart and Affection to it; if they had, it would not seem a trouble to them to shew it by all the Outward Demonstrations that the Scriptures recommend to us. A devout Heart bows the Body, bends the Knees, and lifts up the Hands in Prayer, without any trouble. And they have reason to suspect their own Hearts, that find these demonstrations of Reverence to their Creator and Redeemer, Uneasie to them.

This very Pretence ought to shew you, That it is the Negligence and Dead-heartedness of People towards God's Service, that has banished these *Bodily Adorations* out of it. We think it no Disadvantage to our Church, that we are forc'd to acknowledge, That *your way of Worship is much Easier than ours*, to such as are present at it; it being much less trouble to a Man that has no value for Religion, to come into an Assembly, and there sit down, and lap his Cloak about him, without being obliged to any Word or Gesture that may disturb his sleep or Worldly Thoughts, than to be under an Obligation every moment to signify his Attention by some Word or Gesture, under the penalty of being Remark'd by the

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the whole Congregation, for his Negligence and Irreverence; which is the case in our Assemblies; and 'tis to be feared, is the Reason that some leave us, and go where they may be at ease and negligent more securely.

4. I confess, in the *Fourth* place, There are some that excuse themselves more handsomly, for not kneeling at their Prayers, &c. Say they, *We want Conveniency, we have no room to kneel.*

To these we Answer, That where such a thing is omitted out of Necessity, not Negligence, or Contempt, we believe God will not impute it to them, neither do we accuse them for it.

But then we cannot but observe that this is not the general Reason of omitting this part of God's *Worship* among you: For First, It is not your Custom to kneel in your Publick Worship, tho' you have Conveniency, as is manifest from the Practice in all your Meetings; in which, I could never learn that any one kneeled; on the contrary, you condemn Us who do.

2. When you want *Conveniency* for *Kneeling*, you might *stand* at your Prayers, which is a *Scripture-posture*, as well as *Kneeling*; you might *bow your Bodies* when you come into God's presence; you might continue *Uncovered* whilst in it: But you omit all these, as well as *Kneeling*; and thereby plainly shew that your Neglect in this point, is an Effect of Choice, not Necessity.

3. If *Kneeling* at *Publick Prayers* be a Duty, we are obliged to provide conveniency for it, for it is certainly a sin to suffer any part of *God's service* to be omitted for want of care. It is as easy to provide conveniency for *Kneeling* as for *sitting* in *Publick Assemblies*: And if we consider, how careful most people are to provide Seats for their ease, and how negligent to make any provision for *kneeling*; 'Tis but too manifest a sign (whatever is pretended)

that they are much more zealous for their ease, than for the Service of God.

But what conveniency is it that Men desire? It is easy for them to have as much conveniency as St. Paul and his Congregation had when they *kneeled on the shore, Act. xx.* If they had the Devotion of St. Paul, they would not fail to imitate his Example: *Be ye followers, saith he, of me, as I am of Christ.* St. Paul followed the Example of Christ in this particular; and surely we ought to follow his, except we think our selves grown wiser then He was, or prefer our ease to our Duty.

But the Truth of the matter, as it seems to me, is, That your Neglecting to kneel at the most solemn of all Christian Ordinances, the *Lord's Supper*, does harden you against Reverence in the other parts of *Divine Worship*: As it is no wonder it should do so; for if Reverence be not thought necessary in that Duty, it may well seem unnecessary in any other.

## CHAP. V.

### Of the Lord's-Supper.

#### SECT. I.

*What the Holy Scriptures prescribe concerning the frequency of Celebrating it.*

I. **T**He Fifth Main and Substantial part of the Ordinary Worship of God in the Assemblies of Christians, is the Celebration of the Lord's-Supper. It is not to be expected that I should treat concerning the preparation

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tion requisite in the Receivers, or any of those other circumstances, which are generally agreed on as necessary in this matter; and concerning which so many excellent *Treatises* are extant. I shall confine my self to one Point, and that is the *Frequency* of it, as a *Publick Act of worship*, and examine, *First*, What the *Institution* and *Practice* of the Church of God in Scripture teach us, as to this particular. *Secondly*, Compare our *Practice* therewith. And *Thirdly*, The *Practice* of those who differ from us.

As to the *Frequency of Celebrating the Lord's-Supper*, I find many People of opinion, that the Scriptures have determined nothing in it, and that therefore it is intirely left to the discretion of the Ministers, how often they will Celebrate it, and to the People's how often they will receive it: And that on this Account every one is left to judge for himself, when he will be a partaker of it, as he thinks it most for his Comfort and Edification; which makes the Celebration and Receiving it so Arbitrary a thing, that many never receive it at all. And the Universal neglect of it is become one of the Crying sins of these Kingdoms, and a great Objection against the Reformation.

But if we Consider the Institution of this Sacrament, it will help us to pass a right judgment, as to the Obligation of the frequency that lies on us. I shall endeavour to make this plain in the following particulars:

1. Our Saviour when he had blessed, broken, and delivered the Bread to his Disciples, Commanded them to *Take Eat, and do This*, that they saw Him do, in Remembrance of him, and when He had Blessed the Cup, and given it to them, he Commanded them to *Drink all of it, and as often as they drink it, to do it in Remembrance of him.* 1 Cor. xi. 26. Now I conceive the most Natural Interpretation of these words of our Saviour, *Do this in Remembrance of Me, and*

*This do Ye as often as you drink it, in Remembrance of Me,* to be, as if he had said. "We have now Celebrated together the *Jewish Passover* in Remembrance of our Fore-Fathers deliverance out of *Egypt*. But I am about to purchase for you by my Death a much more glorious deliverance from the slavery of *Sin*, and the power of *Hell*. And I order you for the future to *do this* (which you see done by me) in Remembrance of Me, as what you have hitherto done, has been in Remembrance of your Deliverance out of *Egypt*. From this Institution it appears.

1. That the *Lord's-Supper* is substituted in the place of the *Passover*, which was Commanded by the *Law* to be Celebrated once in the Year; and that in a place appointed by God, where all *Israel* were to assemble for it.

2. That Our Saviour has confin'd us to no Place, or perfixt time for the Celebration of his Supper that succeeds it; which makes it much more easy for us to observe it, and renders us much more inexcusable if we neglect it.

3. Since our Saviour has taken off the Confinement to Time and Place, that made the *Passover* such a Burthen; It follows that they who Celebrate it seldom or then the *Jews* did their *Passover*, must needs have less regard to the memory of *Christ's* Death, and the deliverance wrought by it, than the *Jews* had to their deliverance out of *Egypt*. There being no other imaginable reason that can tempt them to neglect purifying themselves for this solemnity of worship, and frequenting it, but the deadness of their Hearts towards *Christ*, and the want of Sense Gratitude and Love towards their Master.

4. *Christ's* positive Command to *Do this in Remembrance of Him, &c.* must oblige us in some Times, and in some Circumstances; And there can be no better way of determining when we are obliged to do it,



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it, then by observing when God in his goodness gives us Opportunity, for either we are then obliged to do it, or else we may choose whether we will ever do it or no; there being no better means of determining the frequency, than this of God's giving us the opportunity. And the same Rule holding in all other general positive Commands, such as in these that oblige us to *Charity*, we may be sure it holds likewise in this. Therefore whoever slights, or neglects any Opportunity of *Receiving*, which God affords him, does sin as certainly as he who being enabled by God to perform an Act of *Charity*, and invited by a fit Object, neglects to Relieve him, or shuts up his Bowels of Compassion against him; concerning whom the Scripture assures us, That *the Love of God dwells not in him*: And the Argument is rather stronger against him who neglects this holy Sacrament; for how can it be supposed that a Man has a true love for his Saviour, or a due sense of his Sufferings, who refuses, or neglects to remember the greatest of all benefits, in the easiest manner, tho' Commanded to do it by his Redeemer, and invited by a fair opportunity of God's own offering?

5. It is manifest that if it be not our own faults, we may have an Opportunity every *Lord's-day*, when we meet together; And therefore that Church is guilty of laying aside this Command, whose Order of Worship, doth not require and provide for this Practice. Christ's Command seems to lead us directly to it: For, *Do this in Remembrance of Me*, implies that Christ was to leave them; that they were to meet together after he was gone; and that he required them to remember him at their Meetings whilst he was absent. The very Design of our Public Meetings on the *Lord's-day*, and not on the *Jewish Sabbath*, is to remembr, and keep up in our Minds a sense of what Christ did and suffered for us, till He come again; and this we are obliged to do,  
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not in such a manner as *our own Invention* suggests, but by such means as *Christ himself has prescribed to us*; that is, by celebrating this *Holy Sacrament*.

It seems then probable from the very *Institution* of this *Sacrament*, that our Saviour designed it should be a part of God's Service, in all the solemn Assemblies of Christians, as the *Passover* was in the Yearly Assemblies of the *Jews*. To know therefore how often Christ requires us to Celebrate this Feast, we have no more to do, but to enquire how often Christ requires us to meet together; that is, at least every *Lord's-Day*.

II. And the same is farther manifest, in the second place, from the *Examples* of the *Apostles*, and of the *Churches of God* in the *New Testament*. They cannot be supposed but to have understood what Christ meant by these words, *Do this in Remembrance of Me*; and if it appears that they did make this Feast a constant part of their Ordinary Worship, we may safely conclude, That Christ meant it should be so. And here 'tis observable, That we do not find any solemn stated Meeting of Christians for Worship in the whole New Testament, without it.

At first the Disciples had their Meetings every Day, and then they likewise daily received this Sacrament, *Acts ii. 46. And they continued daily with one Accord in the Temple, and in breaking Bread from House to House*: And St. Paul supposes that their Meeting together was on purpose, and with express design to Celebrate this Feast, *1 Cor. x. 20. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's-Supper*; which intimates, That one main Design of their coming together, was and ought to have been, *to eat the Lord's-Supper*; tho' by their misbehaviour they so corrupted the Ordinance, that it could not be called *His Supper*.

If one should now reprove Christians, whom they observe to mis-behave themselves in Church, in these words:

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words : *When you come together into one place, this is not to hear the word of God Preached to you, for one is Talking, and another is Sleeping ;* Would not every Body conclude, That in the Opinion of the Reprover, the *Hearing the Word of God Preached*, ought to be one End of their coming together ? And then surely the Apostles saying, *That when you come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's-Supper, &c.* gives us ground to conclude, that in his Opinion, *Eating the Lord's-Supper* ought to be one constant End of our coming together. Which is further manifest from the Advice he gives them, *vers. 33. Wherefore, my Brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.* One End therefore of their coming together, was, as Children come together in a family at Meal-time ; that is, to be fed at their Father's Table : For what the Apostle called in the former Verse, coming together *into one place* ; in this Verse he calls, coming together *to eat* ; intimating, that a main end of their coming together *into one place*, was *to eat*.

3. When the Meeting of Christians came to be fixed to the *First Day of the week*, or the *Lord's-Day*, the *Breaking of Bread* was likewise brought to the same Day : So *Acts xx. 7. And upon the first Day of the Week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread, Paul preached unto them.* From which words we may conclude two things ; *First*, That the *First Day of the Week* was the Disciples time of Publick Worship. *Secondly*. That the *the Breaking of Bread*, or celebrating the Holy Eucharist, was a part of that Worship. The Scripture is as plain for the one as the other. There have been some disputes raised about Changing the Day of Worship from the *Iast* to the *First Day of the Week*, and this place is usually produced to justify the Change ; And sure the same place is as clear for the Celebration of the *Lord's-Supper* on that Day, as for the *Observation of the Day*

*Day it self*, instead of the *sabbath*. And therefore whoever willfully passes the *Lord's-Day* without it, doth not observe it as the Scriptures ( from the practice of the Disciples ) direct us to do.

4. I have endeavoured all along to confine myself to the plain words of Scripture, and to use such Arguments only, as the meanest persons might be able to judge of from their *Bibles*; Yet in a Controverted place of Scripture, concerning the meaning of a Command of Christ, relating to some positive Duty, I take the constant practice of the Church from the Apostles downward, to be a good means of determining the sense of it. And as there is not any Example of a stated Assembly for Worship in the *New Testament* without the *Lord's-Supper*, so I think there is not any Example of that Nature in all *Antiquity*. For the truth of which I appeal to those that are skill'd in it. The nearer we come to the Apostles, we shall still find the *Lord's-Supper* the more punctually observed, as a constant part of the *Ordinary service* of the Church: And 'tis remarkable, that when first some who had been present at the Prayers and Preaching of the Church began to go away from the *Publick Assemblies* without *Receiving* ( which was a corruption that came in about 300 years after Christ ) it was looked on as so great an Innovation and breach of the *Scripture Rule*, that the Church decreed whosoever was guilty of it should be Excommunicated. So, particularly the *Ninth* of those commonly called the *Canons of the Apostles*, and the *Second Canon of the Council of Antioch*. Thus the Practice of the Church continued for many Ages. And tho' the generality of Men could not be persuaded constantly to partake of the *Lord's-Supper*, after the Discipline of the Church was dissolved, and the Piety of Men began to cool, yet still it was Celebrated on the *Lord's-day*, according to the first settled Practice of the Church.

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5. And indeed the corrupt practice of the *solitary Masses* of the *Papists* is a farther Evidence of its being counted Originally a part of the *Ordinary worship of God*. I think it is confessed by all, even by the *Papists* themselves, that those *Masses* had their Original from the universal corruption and negligence of Christians; For whilst the People had either Piety or Zeal, they communicated with the Bishop or Ministers, in every Assembly, at least a competent number of them: But when Piety and Devotion were in a manner lost in the corrupt Ages of the Church, it came to pass, that tho' the Minister Consecrated the Elements every *Lord's-day*, according to the Example of the *Holy Scriptures*, and *Antiquity*, yet he could prevail with few or none to receive with him, but was often forced to receive alone. This was a great Corruption and a falling from the Scripture precedent; but the *Roman Church* instead of Reforming the abuse, by obliging the people to receive as formerly, corrupted her principles, as well as practice, and decreed it lawful and sufficient for the Priest to receive alone. Yet this abuse shews us what should be, and what has been the Practice; and that the Church has constantly reckoned the *Lord's-Supper*, as an Ordinary part of Publick Worship in Christian Assemblies on solemn days; and sure then to lay it aside can be termed no less than an Invention of our own, since we can neither in Scripture, nor in the Church of God for 1400 years together, ( which is a sufficient commentary on the *Scripture-Text* ) produce one Example of a stated solemn Christian Assembly without it.

## SECT. 2.

*The Practise of our Church as to frequent Communions.*

I. **H**AVING thus consider'd the Rules and Examples that the Scriptures afford us in this point, let us in the *second* place compare the *Rules and Practise of Our Church* with this pattern. I will not pretend that they come fully up to it, this being the most defective part of the *Reformation*; But I doubt not on view it will appear that *Our Church* comes nearer the Scripture precedent then perhaps any other.

'Twas the design of the *Reformation* to throw out the corruptions of the *Church of Rome*, and to bring things back to what was practised in the Apostles time, and in the purer Ages of the Church. And as to the present point before us, *Our Reformation* found two corruptions crept in by time: The *First* was, That the Priest received the *Lord's-Supper* alone, without the people, which destroyed the Nature of this *Holy Sacrament*, as a *Communion*; The *Second* was, That the people thought they had sufficiently observed the *Lord's-Day* if they saw *Mass*, without understanding it, or receiving. Our Church therefore to reform the *First* of these, Ordains, That there shall be *no Communion*, except 4 ( or 3 at the least ) Communicate with the Priest. So where 3 are willing to Receive, the Ministers may proceed to the *Holy Communion* every *Lord's-Day*. For our Saviour has promised that *Where two or three are met together he will be in the midst of them*.

*Three* therefore make a Congregation, and have a Title to the Ordinances of *Christ*; and there is no reason that the Obstinacy or Negligence of others should hinder such as are willing from Worshipping God,



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God, according to his *Institution* ; and therefore Our Church has taken care to provide for them, by Ordering that some part of the Communion-Service be read every *Lord's-Day* ; both with design to put all people in mind of their Duty, and to accommodate such as can be prevail'd on herein to live up to the Rules of Scripture, and the practice of the Primitive Church.

2. 'Tis Ordered, That in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Colledges, where there are many *Priests* and *Deacons*, they shall all receive the Communion every Sunday at the least.

3. That every *Parish-wor* shall communicate at least three times in the year, whereof *Easter* to be one ; and surely such as cannot fit themselves so often, must in their own Opinion, be out of a state of Grace, and deserve to be Excommunicated by the Church.

4. Lastly, As to our Practice, we have prevailed so far, that Universally the *Lord's-Supper* is Celebrated Thrice every year ; and where either our Persuasions, Arguments, or Entreaties can prevail with our People, we have *Monthly Communions* ; and in Cities and large Towns, by the changing the *Monthly Days* in several Churches, people that are devoutly disposed, have Opportunities of Receiving Weekly : And we have reason to bless God that our Church wants not some, and I hope I may say many, such.

5. Upon the whole, it must be confessed, That to hold Solemn Assemblies of Christians, without Communicating, is a corruption of *Popery*, and came in by dissolution of Manners, and slackning of the Discipline of the Church ; and tho' we have not been able to Root out and Reform this *Popish* Practice intirely, yet we have done our Endeavour ; and, by God's Blessing, may say we have made some progress in it ; inasmuch that if we take that for Ordinary which

which has a constant fixed time for its Observation, the *Holy Sacrament* is an *Ordinary* part of our publick Service of God.

And I verily perswade my self, That by God's Assistance we should have brought our people before now to the Scripture-Order of constant *weekly Communicating*, had not the Ill Example and Obstinacy of those that seporate from Our *Church*, Encouraged them in their Negligence, and weakened our Discipline: For our *Church* orders *Non-Communicants* to be presented and punished; and our Ministers do not generally flatter the people in their sin, or dissimble their Duty in this point; but frequently and earnestly, by *Sermons*, *Admonitions*, and *Treatises* purposely published to this intent, press them to it; and therefore we are blameless before God and Man. Nor is it our Fault that the practice of our people is not *Reformed*, according to the Pattern of the *Apostolick Church*, and the Rules of *our* *own*: So that we cannot be accused of laying aside the *Commandments of God*, or of Teaching any *Doctrine of our own Invention*, in this particular; tho' we are yet too far short of the *Primitive Practice and Institutions*.

### SECT. 3.

#### *The Practice of the Dissenters about Frequency of Communicating.*

I Come now (according to my former Method) to You, my *Friends*, who *Dissent from me*, and intreat You to Examine, with *Ase*, your Principles and Practice, by these Scripture-Rules and Examples. And here, First, I must observe to you, That you have no fixt or set *Times* for the Administration of this Sacrament; on the contrary, your *Directory* orders, That the times how often this is to be Celebrated may be considered and determined by the *Ministers and other Church*

**SECT. 3. How practised by Dissenters. 113**

*Church-Governours of each Congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the Comfort and Edification of the People committed to their charge: By which Rule, the Lord's-Supper is Excluded from being any ordinary constant part of God's Service, it being referred to the Discretion of the Ministers and Elders of each Congregation to determine, as in other occasional things, how often the people shall have the comfort of it. It had been as reasonable to refer it to their Discretion how often the people shou'd have the comfort of Hearing the Scriptures read, of joyning in the Praises of God, or in Prayers to Him; which yet they determine they are obliged to every Lord's-day. Had they made the same Rule for the Holy Communion, they had indeed conformed to the Scripture-Precedent, and might have pretended to some Reformation: But to leave the celebration of this Feast altogether Discretionary, I have shewed to be directly against what we find practised in Scripture.*

II. Whereas it is a corruption of *Popery* to suffer the people to be present at the publick Assemblies for Worship and celebration of the *Lord's-Supper*, without being obliged to Receive; your Teachers, instead of endeavouring to reform this Abuse and Innovation, have fallen into another practice as unprecedented in *Scripture*, the Excluding this Sacrament intirely from your ordinary Solemn Meetings. And truly in this point you seem more inexcusable than the *Papists* themselves; for the *Papists* order the Elements to be consecrated every Lord's-day, and distributed to those that desire it: But your Teachers neither offer it to the people, nor invite them to it; nay, so far are they from it, that they do not so much as afford an Opportunity to those that desire to be constant Receivers: Which is plainly to multiply the Abuses introduced by *Popery*, instead of Reforming them.

III. They rarely press their People to Communion

cate; they have few Sermons or Discourses to that purpose; and many of them condemn our Zeal, for endeavouring to restore the *constant Communion* predated in Scripture.

I must further make you sensible that your Practice is yet worse than your Principles. Your *Directory* owns that *the Communion, or Supper of the Lord is frequently to be Celebrated.* &c. But it fares with this, as with all other indefinite Rules: they signify only that people may do what they please in the case. No body can certainly tell what *frequently, many, often, or convenient*, signify; and therefore where only these words are used in a Rule, it is little better than to have no Rule at all; as appears in this very case: For when people were relaxed from the particular and certain Rules of our Church, by the first breaking off of those of your Persuasion from us, the *Lord's-Supper* was laid aside wholly for several years by some *Congregations*; and at last too many came to look on it as a matter of no constant necessity. I appeal to You, whether it is not yet reckoned a great thing among many of you, if once in a year or two a *Communion* be Celebrated in one of your Meetings; Nay, among some of you it is often omitted for several years together, and in some places for ten or more: I fear I may say, Your people generally have too little sence of the Obligation of Receiving it at all; and your Ministers indulge them so far in this corruption, that a Man may live comfortably amongst you, and with the Reputation of a *Professor*, to *Thirty or Forty Years* of Age, and never Receive at all; And by the best Enquiry I cou'd make, I cou'd not compute that One in Ten that go to your Meetings ever Receive through the whole course of their Lives, notwithstanding *Christ's* positive Command to do it in remembrance of Him. So unhappily are Men over-seen in laying aside the *Commands of God*, for *their own Inventions*. I should be

be glad to find that I were mistaken in this Computation: In the mean time you must give me leave to tell you plainly, That this practice of Rare or *No Communion*, is so peculiarly your own, that I think you are altogether singular in it; and are so far from having any Precedent for it in Scripture, that I doubt whether any Precedent can be found for you, even amongst the most degenerated or Barbarous People that ever called themselves Christians.

And therefore, if you have either any true regard for Scripture, or Reverence for the *Constant and Universal Practice of the Church of God*. You ought to reflect upon your practice herein; and consider how you can answer it to God, or your Consciences.

I will not examine the Reasons, commonly given for your Omissions in this weighty Affair, since it is manifest no Reason of Man's *Invention* ought to be admitted for direct disobedience to *Christ's Command*; If you are Christians in earnest, you ought as often as you have Opportunity, to remember the great Love of *Our Lord and Master*, as he has Commanded; And your Ministers ought to take care to afford you frequently such Opportunities. If you or they neglect this, I do not see how you can with Reason insist so much on the Purity and Observation of *Christ's Institution*.

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## CONCLUSION.

I Have gone through the *Five Principal Parts* of the *Publick Worship of God*; and (I hope) in all of them have made good what I first undertook, and shewed that there needs no more to justify the *Publick Service* of our Church, than

to compare it with the Rules and Examples of Scripture. I have only a few words to add by way of Conclusion; *First* to my Brethren of the *Clergy*, and then to the *Laiety* who are under my Charge.

## To the Conforming Clergy of DERRY.

1. **A**ND *First* as to you, *My Brethren*, that are of Our Communion, and own my Authority, let Me, as a Brother and a Fellow-Labourer, exhort you to be thankful to *God*, that has Entrusted you with such an Excellent Ministry and Service, which being built on so sure a Foundation as the *Word of God*, can never be shaken, or put you to any great difficulty to defend it, since you need no more than the plain words of your Bible, without gloss, or Commentators, to assert and justify it.

2. Let me recommend to you Reverence, Devotion and Diligence, in the use of this Service. I have already observed that there is a Language of Gestures rather more significant and affecting than that of Words. It becomes us therefore not only to Love and Use our Service, but likewise to recommend it to the people, by a distinct and affectionate manner of pronouncing and reading it, and by a devout and grave behaviour at it. This can never be pressed too much on you, or on others by you; since 'tis absolutely necessary to give Life and Efficacy to it; as the contrary will expose the best and most sacred thing to contempt; and bring a greater disparagement on our Service, then all our Adversaries endeavours could ever do. Tho' *Our Service* be appointed by *God*, and Warranted by *Scripture*, yet even *God's Appointments* are Abominations to him, when sepa-



separated from the Heart, and are only acceptable to Him, as they contribute to *Inward Devotion*. Let me therefore intreat you to labour so to perform the *Service of Our Church*, that it may attain the End for which God has design'd *His Worship*.

3. Since the *Service of Our Church* is such as God has required in his *Word*, let nothing discourage us in the use of it: Let us remember that we perform it in Obedience to God; And tho' some hate, some revile, and some despise it, yet that the Author of it is able to vindicate it. This is no new Thing, 'Tis the Entertainment the World has generally given God's *Service*, and his *Truths*: And therefore neither Obstinacy, Perverseness, or Negligence of the People, whom you are to persuade, ought to discourage you. Be Diligent, be Constant, be Resolute, and be assured that God will always give you success so far as is necessary to support his *Truth*. All means are therefore to be attempted; and when one faileth, another is to be applied; And the more averse people seem to the way of *Worship* prescribed by God, and the more eager they are for any Corruption, the more Industry is to be used to bring them off from it; And when all other means fail, earnest *Prayers* and *Intercessions* with God still remain: We are never to despair whilst we have God's *Truth* on our side, tho' whole Provinces should fall off from the Church, As all they in Asia did from St. Paul, 2 Tim. i. 15. Tho' few or none should believe our Report, as it happened to Our Saviour himself; Yet God will have a Reward for the Faithful Endeavours of his Ministers; And therefore we must not desist, tho' people seem obstinate, but in season and out of season, by Exhortation and Writing, by all means of Importunity and Industry, we must press them to their Duty, and endeavour to bring them back to the purity of God's *Worship* as he has Instituted it.

4. Let me put you in mind, That the *Motives* you have

have to do your Duty are the most Noble and Generous that can be ; And you have this Advantage, that you cannot be supposed to be zealous in your Office out of any private Interest, or prospect of particular profit. Your Maintenance and Preferments are ascertained to you by Law, and do not depend on the Voluntary Contribution of the People. And as you are under no Temptation to please them, by complying with their vices or humours, so neither can you be suspected to be diligent and industrious in your Office out of any such mean Considerations. Since therefore what pains you take may well be supposed to proceed only from sense of Duty, and the love of God, let me entreat you to labour in it. It is certain, That neither Popularity, Faction, nor Worldly Interest can influence you to this, so as they may some, that have no other way to attain to Honour, or Support, but by making or gaining a Party. But God forbid that true Piety and Zeal for Souls should work less effectually upon you, than those carnal and servile motives do on others.

Let me therefore earnestly encourage and intreat you to do it more and more, and that you will endeavour to *become all things to all Men*, and decline none of those Arts which are allowable, when applied, to gain the people to *Truth* and *Holiness* ; But very wicked, when employed to divide and seduce them.

5. Let me put you in mind, That you are *Ministers of the Gospel*, and not of a *Party* ; And therefore it concerns you to mind the common interest of *Holiness* and *Religion*, more than those differences that are often of little concern in themselves, and are insisted on only as the occasions and badges of those people, who being resolved to separate themselves, are obliged to take up little differences for distinction. The less you meddle with these disputes, it is commonly the better ; And indeed it is not prudent

## To the Dissenting Ministers of Derry. 119

to mention them, till Mens minds be fitted and prepared by a true sense of the great Duties of Religion: And then the best way perhaps will be to shew of what little weight they are, to cause or justify divisions or quarrels amongst Christians.

I am well aware that it may be objected to us, that whilst we press the great Duties of the first and second Table, and spend our pains and diligence in defending our Common Christianity against Papists, Socinians, Deists, and Atheists, those that are our Adversaries in these lesser points, have made their advantage of Our being employed against the common Enemy, to undermine us with the people; nay, that some of them have even joined with those Enemies to pull down Our Constitution. But yet I persuade my self that we are in less hazard from them, whilst we do our Duty, and apply our selves to the great and common Obligations of Our Holy Religion, than if we should leave this exposed to the Assaults of Our Common Enemies, to guard our selves from the attempts of such back Friends. We must therefore have an eye to them; But the other, the great and common Truths, and Duties of the Gospel, must be our main business. I might add many more Remarks proper to my present subject, but I know your own Prudence & Observation are sufficient to suggest them to you; I shall only add my Prayers for you, that God will encrease your Wisdom and Zeal, and effectually turn them to his own Glory.

## To the Dissenting Ministers of DERRY.

But as to You, My Brethren, That disown my Communion and Authority, I have reason to fear that

that what I shall offer to you may receive some prejudices from my *Station* and *Character*, with which you seem offended ; Yet *reason is reason* from whom soever it proceeds ; and I only desire that you would seriously weigh what I have here offered, in defence of the *Service of Our Church* ; and if the *Arguments* do not convince You, yet let me pray you to reflect thus far on the matter, as to remember, that all Mens minds are not of the same make ; and that it becomes You, and all good Men, at least to treat *Our Service* with respect, since we believe, and think we have proved, That it is clearly founded on the *Word of God*. It will not excuse scurrilous, or unseemly Reflections on it, to say that we are mistaken : For all Men are fallible, and you may as well be mistaken, as you suppose we are ; And therefore least you should be in the wrong, it will be the safest way to be modest in Censuring.

No Man ought to take it ill that another proposes *Reasons* against his Opinion ; but to scoff at, or revile any *practice*, or *opinion* that another believes to be founded on the *Word of God*, is not only ill manners, but is of dangerous consequence ; being apt to breed *Bitterness* and *Animosities* between the Parties ; And if it should happen in a Case where the *Practice*, or *Opinion* is really *Warranted* by the *Word of God*, it would be *Blasphemy* and *Impiety*. And therefore in all matters of *Religion* we ought to avoid this manner of treatment ; and whatever *Book* uses it, we need trouble our selves no further with it, for it certainly is written only to serve a Party, and not *Truth*.

There is another thing that in Justice I think I may request of You, which is, That in *Your Worship* and *Practice* you will not make the difference between us seem greater than really it is. To abstain from a thing confessed to be lawful in the *Service of God*, merely because observed by us, is surely  
very

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very far from a *Spirit of Meekness and Moderation*: And therefore I may hope that you will not indulge your People into such affected distances, that can serve to no other purpose but to make Parties irreconcilable; and must proceed from a greater *bitterness of Spirit* than a good Man can be guilty of towards any Christian.

And that you may understand my mind the better in this matter, I will give you a few instances that I hope will be inoffensive; and in which we may justly expect your Compliance.

1. The *First* is in the use of the *Lord's-Prayer*, which is owned in *Your larger Catechism*, to be *Not only for Direction, as a Pattern according to which we are to make other Prayers, but may be also used as a Prayer*. And in your *Directory* 'tis recommended to be used in the *Prayers of the Church*. Yet I am informed that *You, My Brethren*, of this Diocess, who separate from *Our Communion*, do universally neglect it, and thereby confirm your Hearers in an Opinion too common amongst them, that all *Forms of Prayer* are unlawful. And that for no other reason, that I can learn, but to keep up a difference from us in practice, where we really agree in point of Doctrine.

2. Your *sitting at Publick Prayers*, may be a *Second Instance*, in which we may reasonably expect some *Reformation*. 'Tis a very irreverent thing in it self, against the Command and Examples of *Scripture*, as I think I have sufficiently shewed, and against the *Opinion* of your best *Casuits*, particularly of Dr. Ames, de *Conscientia*, Lib. 4. Cap. 18. *Sessio per se non est gestus Orandi, quia nullam exprimit reverentiam neque in Scripturis approbatur*. That is, *Sitting is not of it self a posture of prayer, because it expresses no Reverence, neither is it approved in Scripture*. Yet I understand that this is the general posture in which your people offer their publick Prayers; and either because it is for their ease, or because you are unwilling

willing to seem to lay any stress on Outward Performances, or lastly, lest you should be like us, you indulge them in it; and some of them are so ignorant that they reckon it a piece of Superstition in us to kneel at our Prayers; and are averse to our Service, amongst other Reasons, because this is required at it. Which Notions, I suppose you your selves do not approve; and therefore we may justly expect that you shou'd endeavour to inform your people better, and bring them to a Compliance with the Rules of Decency in their Religious Performances.

3. My *Third Instance* shall be in the Matter of the *Holy Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper*. I suppose no serious considering persons amongst you can deny but the Celebrating it so seldom as it is done in your Meetings, and the people's backwardness in Receiving it, are very great faults; and therefore we may reasonably expect that you should press home to your people the Danger of their Neglect, and represent to them truly the sin of it, so as not to suffer any to assume the Name of a *Professor* or a *Religious Person*, that doth, not in some measure come up to the Scripture-precedent in this particular; and withal, so order the Celebration thereof, that every one may have sufficient Opportunities to Receive, as the first Christians did; which in your present way of managing, is impossible: From whence you may be sure yours is not the *Scripture-way*, and therefore needs *Reformation*

4. Let me put you in mind, That it is ordered by your *Directory* ( as I have already observed ) that *Ordinary one Chapter of each Testament be read at every Meeting, and sometimes more*. I think you cannot dispense with this Rule, without being liable to just Censure, from all that have a true value for the *Word of God*: And yet I am informed that there is not one of your *Meetings* in this Diocess, where it is observed; to the great detriment of our common  
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*Christianity*, and offence of your Brethren. I know the people are fonder of Sermons and Lectures of Human Composure, than of the pure *Word of God* in its Naked Simplicity; but you know this to be a carnal and sinful Humour in them; And God forbid any that claims to be a Minister of the Gospel should indulge them in it: And therefore as you would maintain a due Reverence in the People for the *Word of God*, I think we may expect your Conformity to us in this particular.

5. I suppose you very well know that the most learned and sober *Nonconformists* do own that *Occasional* Communion with our Church is Lawful, and that people had better come to our *Worship* (as least where he that officiates is of Ability and Sobriety) than sit at home on the *Lord's-Day*, or frequent no Assemblies at all; And you cannot be ignorant that many thousands in these parts neglect all *Publick Worship*, and many suffer their Children to die Unbaptized, for want of Ministers of their *own Communion*; And therefore in this case, it is a point of Justice due to the Souls of these poor People, and to our common Christianity, to let them know that it is their Duty to joyn with us both in *Worship* and *Sacraments*, as far as your Brethren in *England* have Allowed it on such Occasions.

6. You are sensible that amongst those Protestants that dissent from our Church, some are *Congregational*, and others *Presbyterians*; You of this Diocess where I am concerned, profess to be of this latter sort, and agree with us in owning that by *Christ's* Appointment, the particular Churches in convenient Districts, ought, according to Scripture-Precedents, to Associate under one Government; and these again to Unite themselves into greater Combinations of *Provincial* and *National* Churches. The Difference between You and Us is concerning these particular Districts; Namely, Whether the Govern-  
ment

ment of them ought to be in a *Presbytery*, with a *Bishop* as President and Governour, by Christ's Appointment; or in a *Colledge of Presbyters absolutely Equal*. So then, we both own *National* and *Provincial Churches*, as well as single *Worshiping Congregations*; but the *Congregational Dissenters* deny that Christ Instituted any other Church, beside a single Congregation; and affirm that all other Churches, such as *Classical*, *Provincial*, or *National*, are *Human Inventions*; and that every single *Congregation* is *Independent*, and may indeed keep a fair correspondence with its Neighbour *Congregations*, but is not under any common Government with them. These last are the avowed Principles of Mr. Baxter, Dr. Owen, Mr. Lob, Mr. Humphrys, Mr. Byse, Mr. Alsop, Mr. Clerkson, and generally of all the late defenders of the *Dissenters* cause in *England* and *Ireland* that I have met with. Now it is manifest that these Principles of theirs, are much more different from your Principles, then ours are; And the difference is much greater and more material. For it is possible on your Principles and ours to preserve Unity, and to keep up some value for *Excommunication*, and other censures of the Church; since he who is censured in one Church cannot be received into another, neither with you, nor us: Whereas in the *Congregational way*, he that is *Excommunicated* in one *Congregation*, may remove to another, or set up one for himself if he pleases; at the worst, if he should, it won'd be counted but an Irregularity. These Principles are destructive to the Peace and Unity of the Church, as well as to our *common Cause*; and our Learned Men have carefully Answered all the principal Writers of that sort; so that no Books of that kind have remained Unanswered, but such only as were meer Repetitions of what had been said and answered before. I do not remember any of you have of late undertaken the Defence of this important Truth;

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Truth ; tho' the *Assembly of Divines* in their *Humble Advice*----- concerning *Church-Government* ( which I suppose you approve ) do prove it from the Holy Scriptures, in their Title of *Classical Assemblies*. Now we think, in Justice to your Own Cause, as well as to Us, you ought to warn Your People against those Books that maintain Principles contrary to us both ; at least not to bear them in hand, that those Books written against Us, make for You ; for this will appear a great piece of Insincerity, as well as Ingratitude ; and will tempt the World to believe that you are willing to encourage Principles destructive to your own Cause ( as the Principles of those Books manifestly are in this very Point ) so they do but serve a Turn, and strengthen your Party amongst the ignorant People.

6. Lastly, I think we may justly expect from you a ready concurrence with us to beat down such Vices and Immoralities as are confessed on all hands to be against our common Christianity ; such as *Adultery, Fornication, Blasphemy, Profanation of the Lord's-Day, &c.* And since the *Bishop's Courts* are Legally Impowered to punish these, and many are guilty of them who yet will not appear or submit to acknowledge their sins, and upon that Account are Excommunicated : The least that can be expected from you in these Cases, is, Not to encourage such Sinners in their Obstinacy, or to admit them to Communion amongst You, whilst they lie under such Censures ; which might be a means to Reform, in some measure, these Crying Vices.

These are but a few of those things that might be instanc'd ; in which we may concur in our *Practice*, as well as we do in our *Opinions* ; and if we did, I persuade my self, that tho' they did not bring us to one *Religious Communion*, yet they might much contribute to our living easily with one another, and take off that Uncharitableness which our *Religious Dissensions*

*tions* are apt to cause amongst us : However, it wou'd be a great Satisfaction to Me, and I shou'd reckon it some kind of Success in my Office, if I cou'd prevail with any sort of *people*, that profess to meet in the Name of Christ, to come nearer to his *Institutions* in their *Worship*; tho' I should not be able to perswade them to the *Communion* whereof I am a Member.

## To the Conforming LAITY of the Diocess of DERRY.

**A**S to You, my *Friends* and *Brethren* of the *Laity*, who profess your selves Members of the *Established Church*, It hath pleased God to place Me amongst *you*, and to give Me an Inspection *over you*; and 'tis chiefly on *your Account* that I have written and published this Treatise, that it may be a Pledge and Testimony to you of my concern for you, and make my care to reach as far as may be amongst you. I hope my Labours this way may be Useful to you to settle the Minds of the Doubtful, and to awaken you all to Diligence and Zeal in the performance of the Service of God.

The great Principles of *your Religion*, as *you* are *Members* of the *Established Church*, are Uncontroverted on all hands ; and I have here endeavoured to shew that your *particular Way of Worship* is Warranted by the Holy Scriptures. You have reason to bless God, that He has offered you so many conveniencies of frequenting it : In which He has been pleased to give you so manifest Advantage above your *Dissenting Neighbours*, that notwithstanding their Numerousness, you have *Five* places for *Worship*, for *One* that they have. This will render you inexcusable,  
if

if you neglect attendance at them, or spend any *Lord's Day* ( as is too common in this Country ) in a meer Rest from Labour, without any *Publick Worship*.

I must likewise put *you* in mind, that our *Service* is not only fitted for the Publick, but is likewise proper for private Families ; And therefore I would advise *you* to make use of the words with which Our Church has furnished you, in *your Houses*, as well as in the Church. At least to use such select *Hymns* and *Collects* as seem most adapted to that purpose. And at more solemn times I conceive our *Litany* is as full and proper a Service as any Master of a Family can desire to offer to *God*,

I must therefore most earnestly and passionately exhort *you*, by the Name of Our Lord *Jesus Christ*, for his Church's sake, and *your own*, that *you* will add *Diligence* and *Zeal* to this *your reasonable Service*, and prepare *your hearts* to seek the Lord *your God* in his *Holy Worship*. And particularly that *you* wou'd endeavour to convince the World, that it is not *Faction*, or a *Party* you contend for, but the *Fruits of Righteousness* ; And thereupon strive rather to out-live those that differ from *you*, then to out-argue them. Let the innocency of your *Lives*, and *your Christian* moderation convince them of the unreasonableness of their separation from *You*.

I beseech the *God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ* to multiply his *Grace and Peace* upon *You* ; and to influence *you* by his *Holy Spirit*, that *you* may be perfect in every good Work ; and particularly in that of *Worshiping him in Purity and Holiness*.

To

## To the Dissenting LAITY of the Dioceſs of DERRY.

**A**S to You, *My Friends*, that *dissent* from Our *Communion*, it remains only, that I beseech you in the *Spirit of Meekness* (as one that is appointed by the Providence of God, and the care of a Christian Magistracy, to watch over your Souls) That you will seriously consider, and lay to heart what I have here tender'd to you. I cannot prevail with you to come and receive *Instruction* from my Mouth; And therefore I have taken this way to inform you. I will only add a few *Observations*, which I recommend to you, and shall leave the success intirely to God.

1. Therefore you may observe that in this Treatise I have not led you into long *Reasonings*, or the intricacies of *Human Learning*; but I have referred you to your *Bibles*, and you need go no further then to them to be satisfied whether the things I have said be as I have represented them or not. Those of *Berea* are reckoned a *Noble People* (Acts xvii. 11.) because they *searched the Scriptures*, and I pray most heartily to God to give you a part in that Nobleness of mind, that you may search and find the *Truth*.

2. I wou'd desire you to observe that it ever has been, and in all probability ever will be the humour of the *World*, to be more fond of *Their Our Inventions* than of what God Commands. If we look thro the whole Scriptures we shall find, that the *Prophets* sent by God, the *Doctrines* revealed by him, and the *Worship* he Commanded, have had but ill Entertainment amongst the people. There never appeared half so much Zeal or inclination in the generality of Men,



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Men; for the True God and his *Worship*, as for the false Gods, and their *Prophets*. And there is an obvious natural reason for it, since what Man invents must needs have a nearer agreement to the Carnal & Corrupt inclinations of our depraved Nature, than what God prescribes: which is the very reason that induces Men to change the *Institutions* of God, and substitute their own *Inventions* instead of them. A thing that wou'd never come into any Man's mind; if he did not find more ease or gratification to his humour in them, than in observing God's Commandments.

If it were proper to refer you to the History of the Church, you would find that most of all the Corruptions in the *Worship* of God were introduced by the fondness and violent inclinations of the people for them: And that the Church Governours did long oppose them; and were brought with difficulty at last to comply with them. Thus the *Worship* of Images, Prayers for the Dead, Purgatory, the Intercession of Saints, Half Communion, being present at Church Assemblies without receiving the Lord's Supper, and worshipping the Host, were all vulgar practices at first, against the Opinion of the Governours of the Church, who generally Opposed and Condemned them; but being *Human Inventions*, the People were so violent for them, that there was no withstanding them, so that if the Governours they had, would not comply, the people did set up those that wou'd.

Now let me entreat you to reflect a little, and consider with all seriousness whether there may not be something like this in your own Case, especially in the matter of *Extemporary Prayers*. It is plain you have brought them into practice against the opinion and constitution of the Church Governours, and of the First Reformers, who all did settle *Liturgies* in the Churches which they Reformed: This *Knox* did in Scotland, whose *Liturgy* we have ready to produce, to the Confutation of those who pretend to be his Successors,

cessors, and yet condemn *Forms of Prayer*. as Unlawful. This *Luther* did for *Germany*, and *Calvin* for *Geneva*, and for the *French Church*; whose *Liturgies* are still used by them. Yet I find this weighs not much with you, tho' you seem to me to have little to oppose to it, besides a strange Fondness and Passion you have entertained for the contrary; and let me tell you that it is no hard matter to give a reason why the generality of the people are better pleased with such *Extemporary Prayers*, than with *Forms*: For can any one wonder that a prayer which people never heard before, and is adapted to the Fancies and Humours of a Party, with all the Advantages which Novelty gives, should gratifie carnal and itching Ears, more than the fixt and settled prayers of a Church, or that *Form* dictated by *Christ* himself? To joyn in these with *Devotion*, requires us duly to prepare our Hearts, to strain and lift up our minds with much seriousness and attention, or we cannot be affected by them, whereas there is a pleasure, and a kind of sensual delight, in the novelty of the other *Prayers*; and the tone with which they are sometimes delivered, makes the *Hearers* imaginarily Devout; tho' they come to them without taking pains to strain their minds to true Devotion. But you ought to remember that *Images* and *Relicks* and *Mediatory Saints* had the very same effect on people long ago; which made them so fond of them, that they brought them into their worship, in spite of the Bishops and Pastors of the Church; as you have now brought in *Extemporary Prayers*: But 'tis rare to find the generality of Men fond of what is truly Spiritual; And therefore people's fondness of your peculiar way of worship is so far from being an Argument for it, as I find some of you use it, that on the contrary it is a shrewd presumption that it is not from God: Especially since all people are fond of it, as well as good; As is manifest

manifest from many undeniable Instances; which could not be so if it were Truly, and of itself, Spiritual, and

3. I would desire you to consider that nothing can generally induce our Clergy to decline these *Extemporary Prayers*, but their *Conscience* and *Conviction* that they are not convenient in the Publick Service of God: 'Tis manifest that *Extemporary Prayers* would be much more easy to most of us, and less burthensome then the Service we use; You may think otherwise, but assure your selves that you are mistaken; And I dare appeal to those that have tryed both, whether 'tis most easy: There are such both amongst You and Us who have made the Experiment; and I dare refer it, to them to declare on their Consciences which of the two Services they look on to be the greater Burthen to him that performs them. What ever you may think, if we would indulge our selves, it were no hard matter for the unconcern of Us to pass an *Extemporary Prayer* on our Auditory, or to turn the Heads of our Sermons into one. *Lastly*, I have one thing which I would more especially request of You, that you would believe that I sincerely and heartily desire and study the good of your Souls; and that I have in this Treatise endeavoured to promote it, and by God's Assistance ever shall in all my Undertakings.

And if you had the same Apprehensions with Me, You would not wonder at my concern in this matter; or how is it possible that any man that has a zeal or the purity of *God's worship*, should not have his spirit moved within him to see a well-meaning people so strangely misled, as to content themselves to meet together, perhaps for some Years, with a design to *Worship God*, and yet hardly ever see or hear any thing of *God's immediate Appointment* in their Meetings. Now to my thoughts this is manifestly the case of many of You; since a Man may frequent such Meetings amongst You for some Years, and

never hear a *Prayer*, a *Psalm*, or *Chapter* which has been immediately dictated by *God*; and never be called on to bow his knee to *God*, or see either Minister or People address themselves to him in that humble posture. Lastly, never see any body offer to Administer, or desire to receive the *food of Life* in the *Lord's-Supper*. These are Melancholy Reflections to me who believe that *God* has required this in his *worship*; And therefore I hope you will take it in good part that I endeavour to restore them to You.

I have only to add my most earnest Prayers to *God* for You. And to beseech him who is the *God of Mercy* and Purchaser of his Church, by a price Inestimable, to vouchsafe his blessing to these my Endeavours for your Souls Instruction; That you may reap the benefit, and I the comfort of them in the great day of our *Lord Jesus Christ*; who only is the true Teacher of Souls by his Spirit; and is able to Seal the Instructions of his Ministers to your Hearts, to open the Eyes of your Understandings; and to guide you into all Truth.

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FINIS.

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# ADMONITION

## TO THE

### Dissenting Inhabitants

#### of the Diocess of

# DERBY.

Concerning a Book lately  
Published by Mr. J. Boyse

Entituled

REMARKS, &c. On the  
present Discourse.

My Friends and Brethren,

I Have told you in this Discourse (when first Printed, p. 170.) That no Man ought to take it ill that another proposes Reasons against his Opinion; but to scoff at, or revile any Practice, or Opinion that another believes to be Founded on the word of God, is not only ill Manners, but is of dangerous consequence, being apt to breed Bitterness and Animosity between the Parties. — And therefore in all matters of Religion we ought to avoid this manner of Treatment,

never hear a *Prayer*, a *Psalm*, or *Chapter* which has been immediately dictated by *God* ; and never be called on to bow his knee to *God*, or see either Minister or People address themselves to him in that humble posture. Lastly, never see any body offer to Administer, or desire to receive the *food of Life* in the *Lord's-Supper*. These are Melancholy Reflections to me who believe that *God* has required this in his *worship* ; And therefore I hope you will take it in good part that I endeavour to restore them to You.

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F I N I S.

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and whatever Book uses it, we need trouble our selves no further with it, for it certainly is written only to serve a Party, and not Truth. This Observation I take to be certain, and I desire that you would read Mr. Boyse's Remarks, and my Book together, and judge them by this Rule. The Worship of God is to Mankind beyond all other Concerns, and ought to be Treated with all the seriousness and calmness of Spirit that becomes us, whilst in the presence of God! And for any one to treat that which all good Men tender and value as the most serious and weighty concern of their minds, in a Passionate, Angry, Scoffing and Deriding manner, is surely contrary to natural Modesty, and to the respect we owe to one another; much more to the Spirit and Meekness of the Gospel. I will not accuse Mr. Boyse, but only desire you to read his Book seriously, and give regard to it, as far as you find him free from these faults.

I hear that other Answers to my Book are coming out, and if I find in them that Spirit of Piety and seriousness that becomes Christians, more especially Men of tender Consciences, I will with God's help give them a due Consideration; and if there be any thing material in Mr. Boyse's Remarks, which is not taken Notice of by them, it shall then likewise be considered: In the mean time what I think needful to give you an Account of in this Admonition, is,

1. *First*, The chief Motive that prevailed with me to Publish my Book. *Secondly*, That Mr. Boyse has Granted, in effect, the chief things I pleaded for in it. *Thirdly*, That he is much mistaken in those Matters of Fact which he Charges on me as Mistakes. If I give plain Instances and Examples in each of these, you may judge by them what to think of the rest of his Book.

I. As to the first of these, namely, my design in publishing

*concerning Mr. Boyse's Remarks, &c. 129*

*Writing this Book* ; I have been now above three Years amongst you, and I have taken the best care I could to inform my self of the State and Condition of this Diocess, and of every Parish therein. I have visited each of them several times, and discoursed personally with many hundreds, and informed my self particularly of the Customs, Manners, Inclinations and Scruples of every sort and Persuasion : I found to my great trouble much ignorance amongst the poor People ; insomuch that of 800, or more of the Dissenters Communion, whom I personally discoursed, I did not find above four Persons that could give any Account of their Catechism, and only two that could repeat it, and a great many that could neither say the *Creed*, the *Lord's-Prayer*, nor *Ten Commandments* : Of this I have many Witnesses that were present at some of my discourses. I do not say this ignorance was peculiar to Dissenters, for too many conformable Persons were in the same Condition : This I looked on with great Compassion and Concern, as it became me, and in Order to remedy it, I took care to have English Schools kept in every Parish, according to Law, and obliged the Schoolmaster to teach the Catechism, and the Ministers to Catechise in each Parish ; and I furnished them with Catechisms, which with God's Assistance has proved of good use to such as are Conformable, near 2000 of all Ages having since learned the Catechism, and presented themselves to be Confirmed ; I could not have the same influence on you that differ from Me, and yet I hope my Endeavours have not been useless to you, but have help'd to raise an Emulation in you to instruct your Children.

I found the great Obstacle to your Learning your Catechism, was, the length and intricacy of it, insomuch that generally speaking, whoever could not read must despair of getting it by Heart ; this put me upon persuading you to make use of an easier Catechism, not excluding your own if you had a mind to it.

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I hear that other Answers to my Book are coming out, and if I find in them that Spirit of Piety and seriousness that becomes Christians, more especially Men of tender Conscience, I will with God's help give them a due Consideration; and if there be any thing material in Mr. *Boyle's* Remarks, which is not taken Notice of by them, it shall then likewise be considered: In the mean time what I think needful to give you an Account of in this Advertisement, is,

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I. As to the first of these, namely, my design in publishing

Writing this Book; I have been now above three Years amongst you, and I have taken the best care I could to inform my self of the State and Condition of this Diocese, and of every Parish therein. I have visited each of them several times, and discoursed personally with many hundreds, and informed my self particularly of the Customs, Manners, Inclinations and Scruples of every sort and Persuasion: I found to my great trouble much ignorance amongst the poor People; insomuch that of 800, or more of the Dissenters Communion, whom I personally discoursed, I did not find above four Persons that could give any Account of their Catechism, and only two that could repeat it, and a great many that could neither say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, nor Ten Commandments: Of this I have many Witnesses that were present at some of my discourses. I do not say this ignorance was peculiar to Dissenters, for too many conformable Persons were in the same Condition: This I took on with great Compassion and Concern, as it became me, and in Order to remedy it, I took care to have English Schools kept in every Parish, according to Law, and obliged the Schoolmaster to teach the Catechism, and the Ministers to Catechise in each Parish; and I furnished them with Catechisms, which with God's Assistance has proved of good use to such as are Conformable, near 2000 of all Ages having since learned the Catechism, and presented themselves to be Confirmed; I could not have the same influence on you that differ from Me, and yet I hope my Endeavours have not been useless to you, but have help'd to raise an Emulation in you to instruct your Children. I found the great Obstacle to your Learning your Catechism, was, the length and intricacy of it, insomuch that generally speaking, whoever could not read must despair of getting it by Heart; this put me upon persuading you to make use of an easier Catechism, not excluding your own if you had a mind to it.

Again I observed that when I wrote my Book, there were only Nine Meeting-Houses in the Diocess, and I think the Number is not increased since, and by the best Enquiry I could make among your selves and other People, I found that there were (taking one Meeting-House and one Lord's-Day with another) not 300 at each Meeting. Now I understand that in this Diocess there are 30000 that profess themselves of your persuasion, and on that account absent themselves from Church. From which Computation I perceived that only 1 in 10 of them, or thereabouts went to Worship God any where on the Lord's-Day : This I confess was a great grief to me, and however Mr. *Boyle* may scoff at my concern, as he doth at it in other cases, I shall not be ashamed of it, but pray to God to encrease it in me while such occasions remain, and direct me to Methods to remove them, I found that the case was not much better with you before the Troubles than since ; for tho' there were then some more Meeting-Houses than at present, yet I believe the Number of People was near proportionable more also. I found the sense of Religion much decayed amongst you, by means of this small number of your Meeting-Houses, and many of you when I have pressed you to Worship God somewhere, have answered me that you could do it at home ; and indeed I have found some that had not been at any Publick Worship in Seven Years, and it is not to be wondered at, when some of you are Ten Miles, some Twenty from a Meeting place. I cast about in my mind how to remedy this, and in Order to it enquired of many of you why you did not frequent the Publick Church, since you had none else which you could constantly attend with your Families ; I perceived that three Objections, especially had stuck with you formerly. *First*, That our Ministers were Popishly inclined. *Secondly*, That some of them were of ill Lives and Negligent. And



*concerning Mr. Boyse's Remarks, &c. 137*

And *thirdly*, That our Service was only Human Inventions, and had no particular Warrant from Scripture. The first and second of these I found, by God's Blessing, in great Measure removed at my coming among you. so that I cannot say that any one of you ever objected them to me. And as to the third, I particularly Examined, what things they were in our Ordinary Lord's-Days-Service, which you taxed as Human Inventions, (for I only invited you to that Service) and which made you think it more justifiable to stay at home rather than to come to our Churches, and I carefully marked what you objected, and put them in the Form that you now find them in this Book; In which I designed neither to shew Wit or Learning, but to propose it to you of my Diocese, and to you only, in such a plain Method and Style as might suite your Capacities, for I think you are not concerned in Books which you cannot understand; I am sure you cannot understand the Generality of Controversy Books, I confin'd myself therefore to what I had seen and known to be your Opinions and Practice, and I was resolv'd that my Book should go no further than to you, and therefore I Printed only a few, which I distributed amongst you, and took care that not one of them should be Sold. I must own that the Book is Re-printed in *London*, but this was altogether without my knowledge, and very much to my dissatisfaction. But I cannot prevent the ill Arts of Tradesmen for their own gain.

This was the Motive and Method of my Book; And whether they be agreeable to the Spirit of a Christian Bishop who is concerned for the Service of God, and the good of the Souls under his Charge, or deserve the Treatment Mr. *Boyse* has given me in his *Remarks* (suppose I were mistaken in some things, as I do not find I am) I must leave you to judge.

II. I shall

II. I shall now proceed to the Second thing I propos'd in this Preface, which was to shew you that Mr. *Boyse* has granted the Principal things designed in my Book, and I hope that they may have some influence on you, to Allow the same: the Things are these that follow.

1. He owns that Singing Psalms in Prose is Lawful (p. 10.) which I proved *Chap. 1. Sect. 1. N. 3.* in my Book.

2. That Responses or Answering, in the praise of God, is Lawful (p. 16. & 28.) and he allows the Scripture Precedents which I brought to prove them, in *Chap. 1. Sect. 1. N. 4.* I hope therefore that upon Consideration of his Reasons, if not of mine, you will allow the same that he does, and that these things will not give any such Offence to you hereafter, as they have done.

3. He doth not absolutely condemn all Use of Musical Instruments in the praises of God, so they be only for directing the people in the Tune of the Psalm they sing (p. 30.). I therefore hope, that you have so much Respect to Mr. *Boyse's* Judgment, that hereafter the Organs will not offend you so as to drive you from our Service.

4. He asserts (p. 24.) That none of the Nonconformist Writers have condemn'd the *singing of Psalms, as used in our Cathedrals by a Quire*, tho' he supposes it Unscriptural, nor the *saying them in Parish-Churches*, by way of Responses, and that only some weak and injudicious People have Alledged such Reasons, for deserting the Established Church, and that they are not to be reckon'd as Condemned by our Saviour, in *Mat. 7. 7.* for *Commandments of Men*: And therefore I hope in Respect to his Judgment, you will lay aside all such Reasons, for your Non-compliance with the Established Worship, and retain no ill Opinion of us that do comply with these things. To gain which I shall reckon a great step, and worth the writing

ting my Book, and shall be heartily glad to find, as Mr. Boyse intimates, that it was only the weak amongst you that insisted on these things.

5. He grants (p. 9.) That God has no where expressly Determin'd, whether we shall pray with, or without a Set Form; and that therefore both ways of praying may be Lawful in General, tho' particular Circumstances may sometimes render the one or the other more *Convenient*. So that this Matter of praying with, or without a Set Form, according to him, is a Matter of *Conveniency* only, and to be determined by Circumstances; And therefore upon Mr. Boyse's Principles, since our Forms of Prayer can seem to you at worst to be only *Inconvenient*; surely it is better to dispence with an *inconveniency* than to neglect all Publick Prayers.

6. He grants (p. 31.) That in some particular Cases; God did Recommend to the *Jews*, a *Form of Words in their Addresses to Him*, and that not only to the *People*, but even to the *Priests*, and therefore *Forms of Prayer* are Warranted by Scripture, and are of Divine Original. From hence it follows, That God has not only in general Commanded us to pray to Him, but in particular Commands, both *Priests* and *People* to pray to Him in *Forms*, tho' He has not forbidden other *Addresses* on such Occasions, as I mentioned *Chap. 2. N. 2. Sect. 9.*

7. He grants that the *People* expressed their Joyning in the Publick Prayers, in Christian Assemblies, by adding their *Amen* (as I have proved *Chap. 2. Sect. 1. N. 5.*). And therefore I hope you will not only Approve of this in us, but will likewise Introduce it into your own Meetings. I am sure the Book Mr. Boyse Quotes for this purpose, Advises you to it.

*London Morning Exercise, p. 65.*

8. He grants that the Holy Scripture may be read without Exposition (p. 10. & 95.) and that the omis-

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sion of reading an entire Portion at once is a Defect; and that in the Winter Quarter there is no reading in the *North of Ireland* (p. 92.) and owns that I may justly charge you with Falling Short of Reading so much as the Directory recommends; and therefore I hope our not Explaining every Chapter, when we read it, will be no Objection against our Service: You may know we are obliged every Lord's-day, to Explain and Apply some Portion of Scripture in our Sermons; so that Exposition is not banished out of our Church.

9. He acknowledges that Bodily Worship is Commanded in Scripture (p. 105.) He calls Sitting at Prayers a Sloathful posture, p. 3. and says he cannot excuse it from Irreverence, and hopes that those who have been guilty of it heretofore, will not persist in it without real Necessity. I hope therefore that you will take no Offence at our Service, or Abstain from it, because Bodily Worship is required in it; or use any more that indecent posture of Sitting at Prayers in your Meetings, when your own Advocate Condemns it.

10. He cannot condemn Kneeling at the Lord's-Supper as Unlawful (p. 123.) and grants that you ought to Stand up at your Thanksgivings and Blessing, before Receiving and after; and that he will not excuse you if you do otherwise in it (p. 112.) And therefore as far as you are of his mind in this matter, you will have no reason to condemn us for Kneeling, as guilty of Idolatry; or wonder that we receive the Elements on our Knees, since we receive them with Prayer and Thanksgiving, and continue whilst we eat and drink, in the exercise of them, with the most earnest Passion that our Minds are capable of.

II. He agrees with me as to the Frequency of Celebrating the Lord's-Supper (p. 131.) And owns it was one Constant part of the Christian Lord's-days Worship in the Apostles time; And that he thinks it past all doubt, that this was the Universal practice

of the Christian Church for several succeeding Ages. And therefore I hope you will endeavour to Restore this Apostolick and Primitive Institution to what it was, and consider how Unreconcilable your present Practice of Receiving is to this Institution of Christ and Universal practice.

If these things be universally Believed and Received amongst you, I can see no reason why you should decline our Churches, at least when you cannot go to your own Meetings, and hope you will not hereafter go out when our Prayers begin, as if you were in danger of being Polluted by them, or refuse to conform in the Bodily Expressions of Worship used at them, as I have sometimes observed some of you to do, who rather chuse to stay then disturb the Congregation, by going unseasonably away. If I could gain these Points of you, I should think my Labours in my Book bestowed to a most Excellent purpose, and be content with Joy to endure a Thousand more hard things, than *Mr. Boyse* has been pleased to say of me, who appears by his Book to be much a Stranger both to you and me, and to have intermeddled with us, before he understood either of our Practices, or Circumstances; and I hope by Gods help it shall not be in his power to make you conceive otherwise of my Sincere Affections and Concern for your Souls than I have profest, and shall always desire to Maintain.

III. I shall now proceed to the third thing I promised in this Admonition, and that is to shew you, That whereas there are several Matters of Fact which I affirm, and *Mr. Boyse* denies the mistakes lye on his side, notwithstanding he imputes them to me with great assurance, as Falshoods, and asserts that I am hard'ned in them. For the Proof of this, I need no more than to Appeal to your own Consciences; and I must tell you, that what I have Wrote was from Sight, Experience, or certain Information on the place, whereas he has his account of things only at  
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second hand, and produces no Vouchers. I will instance in some of the principal matters of Fact which he contradicts.

1. First then, One of the Principal Matters of Fact in dispute, is, what I assert (*Chap. 3. Sect. 3. N. 2.*) *That in all the Meetings in the North of Ireland in a whole year, perhaps there is not so much Scripture read, as in one day in our Church, by the strictest enquiry I could make.* (This he contradicts with great vehemence, and asserts: (p. 93.) that there is nothing like Truth in the Assertion; with a great many ill words. You may observe that I expressed my self doubtfully in this Case with a *perhaps* it was so, but assure you that I had no doubt of the Truth of it, only I was willing to say such ungrateful Truths as softly as I could, that I might give the less offence to you. To make this appear, I will take Mr. Boyse's own Computation, and allow that there are read in each of your Meetings every Lord's-day for 3 Quarters of the Year half a Chapter, tho' you know the case is not Universally so; for in some places in this Diocese there has been no Lecturing in your Meetings, for two Years together; but allowing it to be as he says:

Then in this Diocese there are Nine Meeting-places and Lectures, in each, 39 Lord's-days in the Year, and half a Chapter read at each Lecture, which in all makes 175  $\frac{1}{2}$  Chapters.

Now because the First of April was on a Lord's day this year, I will take it and compute how many Chapters and Psalms were read on that day in our Church, and you will find it thus:

On the First of April are read 8 Psalms for the day, 3 before and between the Lessons: That is the 95, the 100, the 57, besides the Song of the Blessed Virgin. So that 11 Psalms were read that Day in every Parish-Church. Besides these, are read 4 Chapters for Lessons, and the Epistle and Gospel make a large Chapter more.



*concerning Mr. Boyse's Remarks, &c. 143*

So then in every Parish-Church there are read Psalms and Chapters, tho' there be no Funeral, or Churthing of Women, or other Occasional Office, 16. There are then 42 Congregations in this Diocess at present, in which the Offices of the Church are constantly performed; and if we Multiply 42 by 16 it follows that there are read in this Diocess in one Lord's-Day, Chapters and Psalms, 672, whereas allowing the utmost of Mr. Boyse's Computation there are read in the Meetings in this Diocess in a Year but 175 and a  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Let me observe that the Meeting-Houses are more Numerous here then in my Neighbour Diocesses in the *North*; there being, that I can learn, only 4 in *Rapho* Diocess, in which, and in the other Diocesses of the *North* the Parish Churches are proportionally as many more then the Meetings, as they are in the Diocess of *Derry*. And from thence it follows that there is really 4 times more Scripture Read in Our Church in the *North* in one day then in all the Meetings in the *North* in a Year, which is a great deal more then what I asserted. I had a Computation like this in my mind when I wrote my Book, and should not have Published it, if these Remarks by imputing Falshoods and Untruths to me, had not obliged me to do it in my own Justification to the World; for to you who know so well the Truth of it, it was needless. And we have this advantage by reading the same Chapters and Psalms in every Church, that whatever Church a Man go to, so he be constant at any, he is sure to find the Scriptures read on in Order, which must needs contribute towards making him acquainted with the whole Body of the Scriptures.

2. But then, Secondly, I charge you with casting out the reading of the Word of God from most of your Publick Assemblies in Insomuch that in many of your Meetings, serving aside a Verse or two for a Text or Quotation, as  
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the discretion of the Teacher, the Voice of God is never Publickly heard amongst you. This Mr. Boyse censures (p. 92.) as a bare-fac'd Untruth: but your selves shall be Judges.

First then, I have proved that Reading the Scriptures, for the Instruction of the People, is a Publick Ordinance of God, Chap. 3. Sect. 1. and tho' it is not determined how much we ought to read at a time, yet it ought to be so Ordered, that the diligent Hearers may in a competent time be acquainted with the whole Body of the Scripture; and in this I have the Concurrence of your Directory. Now if you can Name but one Meeting in the North of Ireland, where this has been Observed, Mr. Boyse may have some Ground to contradict me: but the Case is far otherwise; you have thrown this Orderly Reading of the Holy Scriptures, not only out of most, or many of your Meetings, but out of all of them.

But further, I appeal to your selves whether any of your Ministers ever read one Portion of Scripture but what was either designed for a Text, to a Lecture or Sermon, or a Question. If any one pretend the contrary, I must desire him to name the Time and Place, that I may reprove those Informers that Mr. Boyse affirms (p. 92.) have so greatly imposed on me. But till the Time and Place be named my assertion is literally true, and in a larger sense than I expressed it. I heartily wish you who are Teachers, would amend this fault, and I shall then acknowledge that this part of my Book is Effectually Answered, and of no further force against you. And let me tell you that your compliance in this would beget an honour and esteem in the People for Reading the Scriptures Publickly, which is an Institution of God, and satisfy the World that you have a greater value for the Word of God than for your own Expositions, which no Impartial Considerer will

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ever believe whilst you allow it no place in your Meetings, but when you can have leisure to bring in your own Expositions. And sure it seems strange that you can allow at least an hour for a Sermon of your own Composing, and cannot allow 10 minutes for the Word of God; which is the Truth of the Case, however Mr. Boyse endeavours to palliate it.

A third Matter of Fact denied by Mr. Boyse, is, *That a Man may frequent your Meetings all his Life, and yet have no security, or hardly possibility of Learning from your Publick Teaching all the great Mysteries of his Religion.* This he censures (p. 83.) as a gross and shameless Accusation, and advances it as a known Truth that the great Mysteries and Principles of the Christian Religion are not seldom taught in your Pulpits than in ours. Now to discover whether I deserve the hard words which Mr. Boyse gives me on this account I desire you to consider.

1. That the great Mysteries of our Religion, are the *Conception, Birth, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension and final coming of our Saviour to judge the quick and the dead, together, with the Doctrine of the Trinity in whose Name we are Baptised, and the descent of the Holy Ghost.*

2. That we in our Church have a certain time appointed us every Year for the Teaching each of these, and our Ministers do professedly handle each of them in their discourses on these times; So that every one who desireth to be informed concerning them is sure at a certain time of the Year to have a full discourse, in every Parish, on each of them, in Order to the Explaining and Inculcating them; with the uses and effects.

3. As to your Ministers there lies no Obligation on them to go thro' these Mysteries in any such time, nor indeed in their whole Lives. And whereas Mr. Boyse alledges (p. 83.) that *The Directory requires that Ordinarily the subject of the Ministers Ser-*

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man shall be some Text of Scripture, holding forth some principal or head of Religion. This Obligation is taken off by the following Words, which are these, *or suitable to some special occasion emergent, or he may go on in some Chapter, Psalm, or Book of the Scripture, as he shall think fit.* From whence it is plain, that the *Directory* lays no Obligation on your Ministers to handle professedly any of these Mysteries, and that you have no *Security*, other then the pleasure of your Ministers, that you shall ever learn from their Publick Teaching all the Mysteries of your Religion.

But *Fourthly*, I have examined, and put it to many of your Persuasion whether they ever heard any Minister of Yours that professedly made a whole discourse on the *Trinity*, *Conception*, *Nativity*, *Resurrection*, or *Ascension* of our Saviour, or on his sending down the *Holy Ghost*, and I do profess that I never yet amongst many met one Man that could satisfy me in this point, or assure me that his Minister had done it. Which shews how dangerous a matter it is to leave these things to Men's choice. I heartily desire you that Read this to recollect your Memories, and examine your own Consciences, and say whether your Ministers do once every Year handle professedly each of these Mysteries, as ours do, and if they do not, judge whether it be true that Mr. *Boyle* asserts. (p. 84.) *That the peculiar Mysteries of the Christian Religion are so much more frequently insinuated in your Sermons, then ours, as has occasioned some of you to reproach us, as Preaching little but Morality.* These I am sure are the greatest Mysteries peculiar to the Christian Religion, and they are professedly and indispensably taught in our Church once every Year: What ground can there then be to accuse us of Teaching little but Morality?

5. As to Mr. *Boyle's* excuse for you in this behalf, *That there is no Scriptural Rule or Example prescribing*



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*to Ordinary Teachers the exact Order in which they should explain the Mysteries of Christian Religion to the people. I would desire you to observe that the Scripture obliges us to Teach them all these the whole Council of God, and the same obliges us to do this and all other Religious per-* 1 Cor. 14. 40.  
*formances in Order, or according to*

*an Order* : There ought therefore to be in every Church an Order, whereby every Teacher may be obliged to Teach them all in a competent time, as it is in our Church, and the Directory has manifestly failed in this, having made no such Order, but left it to the discretion of every Minister, whether he will make any of these Mysteries his Subject in his whole Life, and some have been so indiscreet as to Preach for half a Year, nay, a whole Year on the same Subject. I have seen many Sermons Printed by your Party, and yet do not remember above 2 or 3 on these most necessary Subjects ; I am sure they bear no manner of proportion to Ours.

A Fifth matter of Fact denied by Mr. Boyse, is, *That hardly one in ten get your Catechism by heart, nor one in five hundred retains it.* On the contrary he affirms p. 87. *That he believes that if I make a more accurate Tryal I shall find as many of the Dissenters Children that have gotten their Catechism by heart, as of others that have done so by the Church Catechism.* I think I have had an Opportunity to inform my self of the Truth of this matter so certainly that 'tis hardly possible for me to mistake, and I will endeavour to make you sensible of the Truth of my Computation.

First then, you know that you who refrain from the Established Church, are here much more numerous then such as are conformable, and have proportionably more Children ; yet besides Grown People, I have Confirmed near a Thousand Children, all above Thirteen Years old, in Three Years since I came to this Diocess. Many of these I have Examined person-

ally, and always found them perfect in their Catechism, and those that I did not Examine likewise were so, as the Ministers that presented them assured me in the most solemn manner, and I was also informed by several of these Ministers and by the Schoolmasters, that most Children of Conformable Parents cou'd likewise say it, tho' so young as not fit to be Confirmed. Now I desire you to produce me such a number of your Children that can say yours, and I shall be very glad of it.

But Secondly, if you look amongst your own Children, perhaps you may find a pregnant boy here or there that can say your Catechism intirely, but the generallity seldom can go above a leaf or two in it : 'Tis a great matter to find a boy that can say it all ; and the Schoolmasters generally acknowledged to me, that the Children forgot one part of it before they cou'd get another ; and the best account they cou'd give of the matter, was, that they were Learning it, and so the generallity are like to be for ever. I have made so many Trials of this in a whole School at a time, that I can no longer doubt of the truth of it, and it wou'd be very odd for me to think to impose upon you who know so well all these things, and whom I am desirous to Prevail on and Instruct, and can hope to do it only by the Integrity of what I say.

3. As to retaining it, I doubt whether any do it at all after 20. I tried not only a whole School at one time, but the Schoolmaster also, a Dissenter that Taught it. In one of my Parochial Visitations and amongst them all then present, they could not give an answer to that Question in your Catechism, *What is Faith in Jesus Christ*, which was the first that came in my thoughts to ask them for a Trial, and of this and several other like Passages I have many Witnesses.

4. Whereas Mr. Boyse affirms (p. 85.) *That there*

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*is not one of these persons in your Congregations come to years of age, who is not once every Year constantly Instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and personally examin'd about his Knowledge of them. Pray consider a little seriously this matter of fact; I leave it with you, and know what you must conclude, and hope you will be so just to your selves as to determine of what Credit this Author ought to be in his Relations. I will not derogate from your Ministers Labour in Catechising their people, but notwithstanding their pains, there are some Thousands of Men and Women in this Diocess that profess themselves of your Communion that were never Catechised by them, and are altogether ignorant of the Mysteries of the Gospel; insomuch as not to be able (as I observed before) to say their Creed, the Lord's-Prayer, or the Ten Commandments, or to tell how many Persons are in the Godhead, or who they are, or who Redeemed them, of which this very day, in which I Write this, afforded me Two Examples of grown Men, as indeed every day almost doth to my great trouble. As to your Ministers Examining, their way indeed may discover who has their Catechism, but is no way Fitted to teach those that have it not, as ours doth.*

Lastly, I desire you to remember that there is no Rule in your Directory that requires your Ministers to Examine either Publickly or Privately: So that your Ministers performances in this point are voluntary, which is a great Defect: Whereas our Rules make Catechising a part of our Lord's-day Service, and a settled Ordinance in our Publick Assemblies, as it has ever been esteemed in the Church of God.

I must tell you that Mr. Boyse, to excuse this great Defect, puts me ( p. 84. ) on producing some Precept or Example from Scripture, requiring our Reading or Teaching a Summary of Principles in Publick; distinct from Holy Scripture, I am content to put it on this

issue, and desire you to turn over your Bibles and compare 2 Tim. 1. 13. with Chap. 2. Vers. 2. and there you will find St. Paul commanding Timothy, *Hold fast the Form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me.* And the things thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to Faithful Men, who shall be able to Teach others. Here you find St. Paul delivered Timothy a Form of Sound Words publickly, and commanded him to commit the same to others, who should Teach the same, as St. Paul delivered it, that is, before many Witnesses, or in the Face of the Church. I hope no good Man will seek a plainer Proof, for a thing that is so good and Commendable in it self, so Edifying to the Church, and so constantly Retained in it, till the Directory and your Practice left it out, which I heartily wish you may amend.

But Fifthly, The greatest matter of Fact disputed, and indeed of greatest Importance, is, *The frequency of the Celebration of the Lord's Supper amongst you.* I took Notice (Chap. 5. Sect. 3. N<sup>o</sup>. 3.) That your Ministers rarely press you to Communicate, that you have few Sermons, or Discourses to that purpose, and many of you condemn our Zeal for Endeavouring to restore the constant Communion preceeded in Scripture, and did appeal to You whether it is not yet reckoned a great thing among many of you if once in a Year or two a Communion be Celebrated in one of Your Meetings, nay, it is often omitted for several Years together, and in some places for ten or more.

In Opposition to this Mr. Bayse affirms, (p. 136)

1. That it is Universally usual in every Meeting, where an Ordained Minister is settled, to have the Lord's Supper Administered constantly once a Year, and twice in the larger Towns.

2. That the generality of You (as he is assured) do Communicate four or five times a Year.

3. That all of you have the Opportunity of doing it 10

12, or

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12, or 15 times a Year, if you will take the Advantage of Receiving it as often as is Administered within seven Miles of your Respective Habitations.

4. That there is not one in ten, or rather in 20 or 30 that do not receive, except such as are with-held for want of competent knowledge, or the Account of Scandal.

5. That those who Communicate once, do it Ordinarily on all following Occasions.

6. (P. 134) That the generality of your Ministers Administer this Sacrament far oftner then the generality of the Conforming Clergy.

7. (P. 137) That he doth not see with what Tolerable Justice I could upbraid you with your rare or no Communion, when the Members of your Meetings do generally Communicate much oftner then the Members of the Parish Churches.

Lastly, (P. 134) That too many profligate Sinners and Swine are admitted in the Parish Churches.

These are a few of those things he asserts on this head; and gives me many hard words for asserting the contrary: But it will be no difficult matter for You to judge who is in the right. I have (as I believe 'twill be owned) as good Opportunity of informing my self in these matters as any one can have; and have been as diligent in my Enquiries in my Progresses thro' the several Parishes, and on all occasions as I could; and I have had the following Account returned me from many hands, and am satisfied there can be no very great mistake in it.

1. That in the last Seven Years the Lord's-Supper has been Celebrated amongst you

In Londonderry twice	2
In Clondernot once	1
At Ballindret once	1
At Balliskelly once	1
At Burt twice	2

At *Ardstrae* once ————— 1At *Abaderby* once ————— 1

In all 9 times.

So that in this whole Diocess it has been Celebrated by you but about 9 times in Seven Years.

2. At each of these we will suppose there have Received one with another about 400, tho' my Informations allow not so many, so that in Seven Years there may be Computed to have Received 3600 in this Diocess.

3. In the Established Church, since I came to the Diocess, which is about 3 Years and 2 Months, the Lord's-Supper has been Administered

In the Cathedral, about ————— 43 times.

In the Parish-Churches for the ————— }  
first Year, about ————— } 78

For the Second Year, about ————— } 103

For the Third Year, about ————— } 162

In all 386 times.

So in the Established Church the Holy Sacrament has been Administered in this Diocess in 3 Years and 2 Months, about 386 times; that is about 43 times oftner then you have had it in Your Meetings in near Seven Years.

4. As to the Number of Communicants in the Established Church I cannot give an Exact Computation; but as to the Cathedral, where I have for the most part Officiated my self, I can give this Account.

At 4 *Easter Sacraments*, one with another, above 200. In all } 800

At 3 *Christmas Sacraments*, and 3 }  
*Whit-Sundays*, one with another, above 100 at a time. } 600

At



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At 33 Monthly Sacraments, one } 1650  
with another 50.

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In all 3050

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From which it is manifest that near as many have Received in one Parish in this Diocess in about three Years time as with you in the whole Diocess in twice that time, notwithstanding the numerousness of those that are of your Profession.

5. As to the larger Towns, I can call only 3 such in this part of the Countrey, that is, *Londonderry* and *Strabane* in this Diocess, and *Colerain* on the Border of it. Now as to *Londonderry*, it has had this Sacrament Administered but twice in it in 6 or 7 Years; and *Colerain* but once in that time; and as to *Strabane*, tho' it, as well as the other had a settled Minister in it before, and some time since the troubles, yet I am informed from good hands that in 26 years last past, the Lord's-Supper has been Administred but twice in it; And I have the more reason to believe this, because your Sacraments are Administer'd with so great a concourse of Spectators and Hearers, besides those that Receive, that they can hardly escape Observation; which would have been reckoned a Profanation of this Holy Mytery in the Primitive times; and is in earnest an abuse brought in by Popery.

6. If it be true what he affirms with assurance, that the generality of you Communicate 4 or 5 times in a Year, it will clearly follow, That not much above a hundred distinct Persons in all have Communicated in this Diocess these last seven Years. For 4 times 7 make 28; and 3600 (the number of your Communicants in 7 Years) divided by 28, gives about 128; the Number of the distinct Persons that have Communicated amongst you in 7 Years, according to his Computation; but this can by no means be true, and therefore he is certainly Misinformed in this particular.

7. We will allow then that every distinct Person Communicated but 5 times in these 7 Years: and then there Communicated 640 distinct Persons in that time: From which it clearly follows, that not one in twenty of you Communicate at all, there being above 13000 of your Persuasion in the Diocess of competent Age for the Communion.

And this makes his Mistake manifest in his asserting that *Not one in ten, rather in 20 or 30, but Communicate, except such as are with-held for want of competent knowledge, or on account of scandal.* This is a great Reflection on you, and far from the matter of Fact, *First*, that 19 in 20 of your Persuasion should be with-held from the Communion on one of these two accounts. I hope there are not near so many amongst you that are either Scandalous, or grossly ignorant, for tho' I believe one in 500 of you do not retain the Assemblies Catechism, so as either to Repeat or give an Account of it, yet I am far from thinking all such want competent knowledge for the Sacrament; for which a very little knowledge (at least of many things contain'd in your Catechism) I believe is sufficient, with a Holy Heart and inoffensive Conversation: And God forbid all the rest of that great number who do not Receive, should be Scandalous; otherwise then as they are so by not Receiving.

1. As to his affirming *That all you have the Opportunities of Communicating Ten, Twelve or Fifteen times in the Year, if you will take the Advantage of Receiving it as often as 'tis Administred within a few Miles of your Respective Habitations.* The Mistake of this Evidently appears from the former Computation; and will further appear if you consider that there are but 9 Meetings in this Diocess, which has as great a Proportion to the Parish-Churches as any in the North. Now let us suppose the Lords-Supper Celebrated in each of these once in the Year; and suppose

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suppose likewise each Communicant came to each Communion ; Yet even so he could have but 9 times an Opportunity in a Year, and must Travel Forty Miles for a Sacrament : And this whole Diocess may as conveniently Communicate 12 or 14 times in the Year at the Cathedral of *Derry*, as at any of your Meeting-Houses.

9. As to the Practice of Dissenters else-where, I am not much concerned in it ; having Addressed myself only to you of my Diocess, but you may conclude the Probability of what he says concerning them, from the account he gives of your own Practice in this point, if it be true which he Affirms (p. 135.) *That as to the Meetings in England and the South of Ireland, where Pastors are Settled, the most of them constantly Celebrate the Lord's Supper once a Month, others once in Six Weeks or Two Months, and a few once every Lord's-day.* Their Practice is much altered from what it was formerly ; for when the Churches were in their hands, it was quite otherwise ; *St. Warburghs* was a Considerable Parish in the heart of *Dublin*, and was supplied by Considerable Men constantly as to Preaching ; but from the Year 1650, when Doctor *Sibalds* their Episcopal Minister Dyed, till the Year 1657, that is for near Seven Years, the Lord's-Supper was not Administered in it at all ; as appears, sufficiently from the Vestry Books, and the Testimony of several Surviving Inhabitants, from whom I had the information, having been Minister there my self Ten Years ; and I have heard the like of some other Churches in *Dublin* at that time. I find the same observed concerning the whole University of *Oxford*, from the time the Episcopal Ministers were Ejected Aug. 1648, till they were Restor'd again Anno 1660, being 12 Years, *Antiquit. Oxon.* And I have had an Opportunity to enquire concerning the Dissenters Practice in *Waterford* before the Troubles ; and am told, that they did not Communicate above once in

in the Year, if so often: Mr. Boyse had need therefore to produce good Vouchers for his Assertion, or we must reckon it in the same Rank with his Account of what is done amongst you.

1<sup>o</sup>. As to his asserting that many profligate *Sinners and Swine* are admitted in the Parish Churches; and (page 137) that the Parish Ministers take no such pains with the people as yours. I shall only offer these things; *First*, If one such be admitted, it is too many; but we ought to be very Charitable in that point; and 'tis better to admit Ten who Earnestly desire the Sacrament, and Receive it with Appearing Devotion and Reverence, tho' their Hearts be false, than exclude one that is intitled to it. *Secondly*, Comparisons are odious, yet I dare Appeal to your selves who differ from us, whether, generally Speaking, the Conformable People who Receive the Sacrament are not as Just, as Charitable, as Sober, as Sensible of their Duty to God and to their Neighbours, as your selves; and whether you dare not Trust them in Matters of Honesty and Truth as far as you dare trust one another: my Office gives me some advantage towards knowing these things, and upon the Strictest inquiry, I must profess that I neither know nor hear of any such come to the Holy Table: and truly the Devotion with which they generally come is so great, and seems so Unaffected, that I must profess my self greatly Edified by it: And it appears to me that the innocency of their Lives is answerable; and therefore Mr. Boyse has in this been very Uncharitable and Unjust to the Conformable persons amongst us, and except he can Instance some of these profligate *Sinners and Swine* admitted to the Sacrament, he can never acquit himself to them; nor to so considerable a Body as our whole Church, on which he has cast a Reflection.

As to the Clergy, if their Pains may be Estimated by the Fruits of Mercy, Justice and Truth amongst their

their People; and if their People's often Offering themselves to come to the Lord's-Supper be any Test, they surely are not behind your Ministers. Their Publick Labours are as great as any Examples of Scripture or Antiquity recommend to us, and more would only Weary the people; and as to Private Diligence, reckon when you will, and you'll find them as often at Sick-Beds, and in Private Visits to their People, and that they as often Instruct, Reprove, Advise and Admonish, as yours do you. I will not push this any further, or Concur with the Observation of those who pretend to assure us, that Enmity to the Established Religion, and Immoralities, are gotten on one side in too many instances: only of this I would put you in mind, That whoever refuses to Communicate with a Church in Prayers or Sacraments, by reason of the Corruption of its Members or Discipline, ought to be well assured of their own Holiness and Strictness of Walking.

11. Whereas he Alledges (p. 134.) that your Ministers *press the Receiving* the Lord's-Supper more than the Conformable Clergy; and reckons my saying, that your Ministers rarely Press the people to Communion, and that you have few Sermons or Discourses to that purpose, *a groundless Accusation*, denying the Truth of it; I doubt not but there are some of your Party have Written on this Subject professedly, but I have seen few of them, neither do I believe them to be in any proportion comparable to the number of ours, of which I have near 80 by me; and as to your Sermons and Discourses, if they press the Receiving of it oftner than it is prest by us, your Ministers are very unsuccessful in their Exhortations, since 'tis manifest by the effects, that so few are prevailed on by them; I am rather apt to believe that they have not yet made it so much their business as they ought; or at least that they have not taken the right means to perswade their Hearers: by the account

count I have had of their Sermons they rather tend to deter poor weak Creatures then encourage them, by Magnifying the difficulty and danger of the Undertaking.

And tho' Mr. *Boyse* Affirms in your Names (p. 137.) that you know not one instance of a *Person counted truly Religious* amongst you, that lives to *Thirty or Forty Years* without Receiving, yet I cannot believe that you will consent to this; since there are in truth so many instances of that kind among you, and I could, if I thought fit, name a reputed Elder and a great Stickler in your Cause, who is of that age, and not only never Reteived, but Dilputes for it, and blames our Pressing it, as I have met with many who do so too. In short I know many Professors that neither seem ill Men, as to their lives, nor grossly ignorant, in the same Circumstances, and their Conversation has infected some of our own.

To conclude, It were as easie to shew that Mr. *Boyse* is as much mistaken in every matter of Fact, wherein he has Charged me with Falshood, as in these; but the designed shortness of this Admonition will not give me leave to pursue them: These are certainly sufficient to shew the Credit he deserves in his other Assertions.

Let me further put you in mind that I am your Bishop, and believe my self Obliged to inspect and inquire into your Practices, and reprove you where I perceive or believe you to be Mislead: And I verily hope by your having had your Sacraments oftner last Year than formerly, that my publick Discourses in every Parish did contribute to awaken you towards it, of which I am heartily glad; but Mr. *Boyse* has nothing to do with you or me; and as he interposes himself without any Call or Reason, so he Writes either without any or on very partial information.

I knew these things before, but I never design'd to Publish them, as looking on them to be apt to  
give



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give Offence, but if you will look over Mr. Boyse's Book, you will be convinced that there is now a necessity on me to lay them open in my own Justification, and I hope there may be something of Providence in it, since it may be a means to open your Eyes, and let you see that your Practice in Worshipping God has been such, as your very Advocate dares not undertake to defend it, but denies the most plain Matters of Fact, and that your Ministers have not been so diligent to warn you of these Omissions as might have been expected from them. If they had been as careful to keep you to the Scripture Rules and Christ's Institutions, as they have been studious to gain and keep you from joyning with Us, you had not lain under the present Objections, which I fear must prove Scandalous to all that profess Christianity.

I thought here to have Concluded what I Intended to say at this time concerning Mr. Boyse's Remarks; But I find it may be convenient further to add some few Observations concerning the Method Mr. Boyse has taken to defeat the design of my Book, and to hinder you from joyning with us in our Ordinary Lord's-day Worship, by the new Rules and exceptions he lays down; and by what he objects, particularly concerning Our use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism; which he wou'd have you believe that I omitted, because I was not able to defend it.

Before I proceed to these, I desire you to consider that it was incumbent on one that would defend your cause against my Book to have justified your way of Worship by shewing that your manner of performing the several parts of it, as distinguish'd from ours, is warranted by Scripture Precept, or Precedent, or by direct consequence from thence. For there appears no reason for your absenting your selves from our Worship, except your own be more expressly warranted by the Word of God. But instead of un-

dertaking this task, Mr. Boyse argues against it, and condemns the *Rule* as common only with *wild sectaries* (such he calls *the Quakers* p. 7). But as strict as the *Rule* appears, I have justified all the particular ways of Worship to which I invited you, by it. And if Mr. Boyse could have done the same for yours, he needed not have declined the *Rule*. But he seems conscious that your ways of Worship are not defensible on this principle: And therefore he endeavours to furnish you with other principles for your own defence, and other objections against your joining in our Worship. *vizt.*

I. He gives you another *Rule* for the ordering of God's Service.

II. He endeavours to persuade you that the greatest exception you have against joining with us, is not the *matter of Worship*.

III. And Thirdly, He alledges that I have omitted to handle that part of Worship, against which you have greatest exception, and that because I could not defend it.

I desire you to consider a little with me what he says on each of these heads.

I. And first, As to his new *Rule* of Worship, you will find it, p. 7. in these words, *Modes and Circumstances of Divine Worship--tho' necessary in general by divine Precept, yet are left in particular to be determined by Human Prudence. For tho' God has commanded Publick Prayers, Praises, Hearings, Celebration of the Lord's-Supper, &c. yet what time or place we shall Assemble in, in what order these parts of Worship shall be performed, What particular devout posture we shall use, among several equally expressive of our Religious Reverence: What Translation of the Bible, or version of the Psalms we shall choose; What portion of Scriptures shall be read, explained, or applied; What Vessels shall be employed in the Celebration of the Sacraments, and a Multitude of such Circumstances, and Modes of that kind,*  
are

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are left to Human Determination ; only therein the general Rules of Scripture must be regarded. And of this he gives an Example or two, p. 9. God has commanded us to pray, but he has no where expressly determined whether we shall pray with or without a Set Form of Words ; both ways of Praying therefore may be Lawfull. The consequence from which, is, That Human Prudence must determine which way is to be used.

This is Mr. Boyse's great Rule, which he takes for granted ; and allows it is only by it that your way of praising God, Praying to him, Reading the Scriptures, Sitting at your Prayers, and omitting the constant ordinary Celebration of the Lords Supper, can be justified.

I desire you to observe the Rule well, and to compare it with your former Opinions in this point ; and resolve whether you would have easily accepted such a Rule from Me.

I desire you further to observe, That tho' our way of Ordinary Worship needs not this Rule to justify it, as I have shewed in my Book ; yet this Rule fully doth it, in all the parts mentioned in my Book : And I do not find Mr. Boyse denies it ; or that he condemns any one as absolutely unlawful, in our Ordinary Lords-day Worship. And indeed it justifies not only our Ordinary Worship, but many other things that I did not touch. For,

First, If the determination of Time for Publick Worship be left to Human Prudence, you can have no exception against our Holy Days, as unlawful ; for we have in them, used our Prudence to determine that God shall be in a particular manner thanked and praised on certain Sett times, for the Birth, Conception, Passion, Resurrection of our Saviour, &c.

2dly. If the determination of vessels for the Sacraments be left to Human Prudence, our Fonts, Communion-Table, Rails, &c. are fully warranted.

3dly; If we may by our own *Prudence* determine all circumstances of Worship, our Habits are a circumstance, and therefore capable of being lawfully determined.

4thly. If the determination of *Place* where we will perform Divine Worship, be left to our own *Prudence*, I do not see how you can blame us for determining that the Ordinary Prayers shall be offered in the desk, the sermon made in the Pulpit, and the Communion-Service performed at the Lords-Table; Especially since we have declared that there is no peculiar Holiness, or efficacy in any of these, and that they are appointed meerly for Order, Decency, and Edification.

Now tho' I had reason to suspect that you would never have Received such a Principle from me, yet since your Advocate has laid it down, and your Worship is confessedly indefensible without it, I may expect that you will think your selves obliged to stand by it; and that you will not judge of your own Worship by one Rule, and of ours by another.

But further since the determination of these things according to Mr. *Boyle*, is left to *Human Prudence*, it is most reasonable that great caution and care should be used in determining these Modes, lest undetermined by the Scripture; and that it should not be trusted with every private Man; but be referred to the wisdom of the Church and Kingdom; and therefore what the Clergy by their Representatives in Convocation, and the Laity by their Representatives in Parliament, have determined as *prudent* concerning these Modes, methinks should stand against all private Judgments; which in matters of meer *Prudence* ought to submit to the general Wisdom. Especially when what has been so determined, has been confirmed by long custom, and the Universal consent of the Churches of God for many Ages. Therefore you must not hereafter on this principle ask any proof from

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from Scripture for any thing in our Worship, but you must prove it expressly forbidden there, or else you must conform to it, as being determined by *Human Prudence*: Which in this case, by Mr. Boyse's Rule is sufficient.

I hope by this time you see that it was not interest or design to serve a Party that made me omit this Rule, since I might have made so much use of it. But to deal ingenuously with you, I could not approve of it in the Latitude Mr. Boyse proposes it; and I thought my self obliged not to propose any thing to you that I did not approve my self. For I can by no means allow that God has left the determination of Time, Place, Order, Circumstances, Postures, and Utensils, in all Cases, to *Human Prudence*. He has not only given us general Rules to praise him, pray to him, hear his Word, to Worship him with our Bodies, and to receive his Supper, but he has likewise given us many particular Rules and Examples concerning each of these, to which if we diligently attend and mind the consequences of them, and apply them to like Cases, we may have sufficient Directions from Scripture to order our Worship, without having recourse to *Human Prudence*, which is a very uncertain and fallible Rule in the Worship of God.

I have collected many of these particular directions and examples in my Book, and shewed our Worship to be Justifiable by the first letter of them; and sure 'tis a great presumption to lay aside these particular directions and examples, and to substitute others in their stead, because our own *Prudence* judges them more for Edification. It is not easy for us to agree in the determinations of *Human Prudence*; but we may easily agree in a plain particular direction of Scripture. Thus God has determined a 7th day for our *Ordinary Worship*; and you see we have no dispute about it: He has likewise given us *Precedents*

in Scripture to perpetuate the memory of signal Mercies, by yearly Solemnities or Festivals; but because these are not so particularly determined by Scripture as the other, you may observe how difficult 'tis for us, by *Human Prudence*, to agree in them: We ought therefore to be very Thankful to God for his particular directions afforded us in Scripture, and to stick to them as close as we can. As for example, God has not given us any Precedent of Verse Psalm or Hymn in the New Testament, either Originally there, or by Translation out of the Old Testament, in those portions of the Old Testament Psalms that are Quoted therein; but he has given us in the New Testament, positive Precedents of Prose Psalms and Hymns; both Original and Translated; and this ought to teach us what sort of Translation is most proper to be offer'd to God in his Praises. God has given us examples of solemn Adorations in his Worship, of Kneeling, Bowing, and Standing before him; and this alone is sufficient to bring you and us to uniformity in this point.

And the like may be said of all these Instances I have given you in my Book; where I have laid down the particular Rules and Directions God has given us for performing the several parts of his Worship: In all which the letter of the Scripture is clearly on our side, and Mr. *Boyse* has not opposed Scripture to Scripture; but has declined the literal sense in many Cases without reason, and has preferred the determinations of *Human Prudence* in others, as being more for *Edification* than the Scripture Examples; as is manifest in your manner of Singing Psalms, and many other particulars. But I remember the Apostles rule, 1 Cor. 1. 25. *The foolishness of God is wiser than Men*; the meanest example or precedent in Scripture, is to me more conclusive in the Worship of God, than the most wise Determination of *Human Prudence*.

And



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And therefore I conclude that we cannot have a more clear or certain *Rule*, or more likely to unite us in God's Service, than what I have laid down in my Book; and I intreat you again to compare your Worship with it; and to reform those things that are not contained in Scripture or warranted by Example of Holy Men in it, or may not be deduced by clear consequence or parity of reason from them. This Rule is plain enough to any capacity; and to go about to explain it, will only, as Mr. Boyse has done, make it obscure and uncertain.

II. But 2dly, Mr. Boyse endeavours to perswade you, That the greatest exception you have against joyning with us, is not the matter of our publick Ordinary worship.

Hence in his Preface, he tells you, that I have taken the greatest pains to maintain the best Fortified parts of our Churches constitution, and left the Feeble unguarded, and p. 169. he says, That I take no notice of Human Inventions in the Discipline of the Church, about which, he alleges, That I know the Contest between the established Church and Dissenters chiefly lyes; and upon this he proceeds, and makes many proposals or demands.

But I desire you to observe, First, That my Discourse was concerning the *Inventions of Men in the worship of God*; and it is a Subject large enough, and to handle it well, and in such a Method as may help the Reader to have a clear understanding of it, is an useful work, and sufficient for one Discourse: and for Mr. Boyse to tax me for not writing another on the *Inventions of Men in the Discipline of the Church*, is very unreasonable. He is not pleased that I wrote this, and yet he would have had me write another on a Subject more apt to give offence; for I assure my self if ever I should write on that Subject, you would be less pleased with my performance than in this; since I must look on the general frame of your whole Constitu-

Constitution (at least so far as its conformable to those *Heads of agreement* that Mr. *Boyse* owns) to be a meor *Human Creature*, without Warrant from Scripture, or any sufficient Foundation to oblige Men to submit to discipline.

2. But Secondly, when a Man desires to shift his ground, 'tis a presumption that he apprehends himself under some disadvantage in it. And if there were not something of this nature Mr. *Boyse* had not needed to propose enlarging or multiplying the matters in Controversy. 'Tis reckoned a wise contrivance in our Common Law, that it allows not of a *double Plea*; but obliges the defendant to stick to one thing only, as the most effectual means to bring the difference between the Parties to a Conclusion; I have reason therefore to do the same, and to decline any further entring into Controversy, till this of Worship be driven as far as it can; As I think it is in several Points, by Mr. *Boyse's* own confession; who doth not so much as attempt to justify your *sitting* at your Prayers and Thanksgivings, or your not signifying your Publick consent to them by your *Amen*. It is much the same as to your manner and frequency of *Communion*; and your not using the *Lords-Prayer*; and your way of *singing Psalms*, which is acknowledged to be Un-Scriptural, and in several other instances: Therefore let these be Reformed first, and then it will be proper to consider the Rest.

3dly, Our Constitution and Discipline are certain and determined, being laid down in our publick Authentick Records, by which we are obliged to be judged. But there is no such Settlement of your Constitution or rules of Discipline; you have a confession for your Faith, and a Directory for your Worship: and we can compare them with ours, and judge which are most agreeable to the Scripture, and therefore it is a proper Work for a Bishop of the Church to examine them by that Rule. But

I know

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I know of no Authentick Declaration concerning your constitution of Government or Discipline. Proposals were indeed made by the *Assemblee of Divines* to that purpose; but rejected by the Parliament, and many of your Party, and looked on as inconsistent with the Laws of the Kingdom, and Liberty of the Subject; and therefore till it be agreed among you, and declared in some Authentick way, what your Discipline and Constitution is, and by what Rules you proceed in your Judicatories, I think it very unnecessary to dispute with any person in his private Capacity, what his Sentiments are as to these points, & especially since I believe Mr. Boyse's Sense of these things is much different from yours, both as to the Officers, Rules, and Manner of proceeding in your Judicatures; insomuch as you are not yet agreed who shall have the full power of the Keys, whether a single Congregation or a Presbytery.

As to the *Worship of God*, is the great and immediate business of the Church, and for the due performance thereof, Officers are appointed chiefly, and Assemblies held; whereas *Discipline* is but a handmaid to it, and designed to keep it pure. And therefore the difference in *Discipline* ought to make no separation from our Assemblies, as long as that *Worship* is performed according to the appointment of God, as to the Matter and Manner of it,

There were great defects and disorders in the Discipline of the Church of *Corinth*; yet the Apostle doth not advise the Sound part to hold Meetings separate from the other. And therefore before any defects in *Discipline* be objected to us, some Precedent or Command in Scripture ought to have been produced, Warranting on the account of *Discipline*, the gathering a Congregation of one Party of Christians in the same place, distinct and separate from others, who worship God in true Faith and Holyness, and in a way Warranted by the Holy Scriptures; and if there be no Command or Precedent in Scripture

ture for any such Practice as this, I think it is evident that you ought not, on the account of the defects of *Discipline* ( which when all is done are for the greatest part pretended not real ) absent your selves from our Assemblies for *Worship*, especially when you have none else to go to on the Lord's-day.

And this will appear yet more reasonable, when you consider those Demands in particular, which Mr. *Boyse* has made to us concerning *Discipline* in his Appendix; none of which, if they were as he represents them ( as they are really far otherwise ) ought to hinder your joyning in our *Worship*, which they do not concern or effect. I will only give you two or three Examples in the most material of them. The first concerns the difference of *Bishops* and *Priests*; whether they differ in *Degree* or *Order*. May not we Receive the Lord's-Supper together, tho' the Popish Schoolmen, to advance the Pope's power and depress Bishops, held that a *Bishop* and *Priest* differed only in *Degree*, not in *Order*: a Question I persuade my self, few of you will understand, and has no relation to that Sacrament; since ( however it be ) both *Bishops* and *Priests* have power given them to Administer it.

The like may be observed of the 5th Demand; Judge your selves whether it any ways interferes with our going into the House of God as Friends, that our Church allows a mere positive absolution to a sick man on his submitting himself to the Censure and Judgment of a Minister, by an humble Confession of some secret Sins that torment his Conscience, than in other cases; and yet this is one thing Mr. *Boyse* offers as a bar to your Union with us in his 5th Demand.

The same may be said of the 7th, that concerns the Examination of Ministers to be Ordained; since it no ways hinders a Man's comfortable living under the Ministry of his Spiritual Guide, if he be really blameless ( as I hope those in this Diocese are ) that  
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our Canons are not very strict in the point of Ordination, as long as they are as strict as the Apostles, 1 Tim. 3. And indeed to such a degree, that some who have been found unqualified and insufficient for Learning by them, are received as Preachers amongst you, after being rejected by us. Of which I have one Notorious Example since I came to this Diocess.

The like may be observed in the 11th Demand, that concerneth the peoples interest in choosing their Minister; which can no ways excuse your absenting your selves from our Worship, or refusing our Ministry, as long as our Ministers are good Men and fit for their Office; nay, much better and fitter, by the confession of some of your selves, than those for whom some Parishes in this Diocess have Petitioned, when Vacancies happened. As appears in three or four Instances since I came to it.

I cannot see to what good purpose the proposing these can serve, or why they should be debated on this occasion. Government and Discipline are very intricate things in themselves, and few of you are capable of determining the Questions relating to them; but the Rules relating to *Worship* are plain, and you are indispensibly required to Worship God, tho' many things in the Government of the Church should be amiss, and it should be beyond your power to help them!

5. Lastly, I can by no means allow that Mr. Boyse had any reason to make such Demands as these, or to expect any answer to them. All the occasion he pretends for them, is, because I made some requests to your Ministers in the Conclusion of my discourse; one of which concerned the Exercise of your Discipline, that it might be with less offence to us, and advantage to our common Christianity; and from thence he concludes that I cannot take it ill if we (saith he) p. 170.) use the like freedom, in offering with all Humility the following requests. But that the Case

Case is no ways the same, nor the requests equal, will appear if you consider, First, The Persons concerned in them; Secondly, The Things demanded; And Thirdly, The manner of proposing them.

1. As to the Persons concerned, I may put you in mind, that the Laws of the Kingdom, and of the Established Church, have Constituted me Bishop of this Diocese; And tho' you do not own my Authority, as duly received from Christ, yet I my self am persuaded it is so; and that the duty I lye under from my *Consecration Vow*, obliges me to watch over, and to endeavour to instruct and advise you out of the Holy Scriptures. But Mr. *Boyse* has no such relation to those he takes on him to advise. He has yet owned no proper Church beyond his single Congregation: He has owned no Ecclesiastical Judicature on Earth, to whom he and his Congregation are accountable by the Laws of Christ. He can claim no Authority over any other Congregation then his own; or challenge so much as to be a Minister of Christ to any other, if they please to question it, without a new Ordination, as appears from those *Heads of agreement*, (*Ch. II. sect. 6.*) produced by himself. Now if there were no more, this makes a very manifest difference in our Cases. But if you further consider to whom his demands are made, it will appear yet greater. I only addressed my self to those of your Ministers that are in this Diocese, and designed my Book shou'd go no farther. But Mr. *Boyse* proposes his to the whole conformable Clergy; Nay, to the King and Parliament, and to the whole Laity of England and Ireland, and this he doth in the name of your whole Party, as if he were your Representative: From which you may see what a Figure he takes to himself.

2. But Secondly, There is as great a difference in the things demanded, as in the Persons concerned. My requests



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requests were only in such things as I supposed inoffensive ; in which we really agreed, and were in your own power to grant me, without altering any thing either in your Constitution or Principles. And in these I had reason to hope for your Compliance : And do yet more then hope for it. But several of the things which Mr. *Boyse* requests, concern Temporal Matters, such as were in the power only of King and Parliament ; Others are such as we think very unreasonable to be asked ; And others are founded on most unjust Representations of our Practices and Principles ; which if truly Represented need no Reformation ; as may appear from his adding to, and taking from our 3 and 4 Canons. *p.* 179. And may further appear in the 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 requests. From all which it wou'd seem that these requests were rather made to amuse you, then that he cou'd seriously expect we shou'd regard them.

3. And indeed as the Persons and matters are very different, so the way of proposing them is no less contrary to that used by me. By his own Confession I gave no ill Language ; I charged you with nothing that was so much as doubtfull ; but if you please to read over his *Requests*, I dare leave it to your own judgment whether he has observed the same temper. He is not content to load our Church with many groundless Imputations, but he exposes the Kingdom and Protestant Inhabitants of it, as again overspread with Swearing, Profanation of the Lords-Day, Uncleanness, Pride, Luxury, &c. (*p.* 182 ) an Imputation that I can by no means allow to be general ; There being I am persuaded, by the goodness of God, a manifest abatement of these in this Diocess. But however the matter be, to make such *Demands* as these in Print, which perhaps one in a thousand of those that are concerned in them shall never see, may serve to furnish our common Adversaries with  
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Arguments against You and Us; and may exasperate and furnish you with objections against uniting with us; but can never serve to amend what might be really amiss in your practice; which I am sure was the design of what I wrote; And I hope 'twill appear that it was so, to every one that will seriously review my address to your Ministers.

III. The Third Allegation used by Mr. Boyse to take off the force of my Book, is, That I have omitted to handle that part of our Worship against which you have greatest Exception. Thus p. 163. he taxes me, *That I have omitted one material part of Divine Worship about the manner of performing which, the contest between the Established Church and Dissenters does most directly concern this charge of Human Inventions--vizt. Baptism.* This he imputes to want of Candour and Ingenuity; And gives me many hard words about it; and more particularly insists on the *sign of the Cross*, which he intimates that I did not mention because I could not defend it.

This then I suppose is one of the most feeble places of our Church-Service that I have left unguarded. I most heartily wish that all our differences were reduced to this one; and that you cou'd as easily clear your selves from introducing the *Inventions of Men* into the Service of God, as we can clear our selves in this particular. And to convince you that I am in earnest I will give you a short Account of my thoughts of it; By which you may know what credit Mr. Boyse's Conjectures concerning me, ought to have with you.

First therefore I will shew you why I omitted this part of God's Service in my Book. Secondly, That Mr. Boyse's Arguments against the Cross in Baptism are of no force. Thirdly, That the *use of the Cross in Baptism* is Warranted by the Holy Scriptures.

I. First then I omitted this *part of worship*, because it was *Occasional* not *Ordinary*. In my *Introduction*, N. 5. I engaged only to consider the *Ordinary Service*

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*Service of God, and the main Substantial parts thereof.* I was sensible that you were obliged to Worship God Publickly every Lord's-day, and are answerable for your neglect if you do not when you may; and therefore judged it of great moment to clear from Exceptions those parts of our Worship in which you are obliged to joyn with us on those days. But you have not that same constant necessity to joyn in *Baptism*; and your Exceptions against it cou'd be no just reason to hinder your Attendance in other Ordinary parts of Worship which you might very well do, tho' you scrupled Baptising your Children with the Sign of the Cross: Especially since in case of necessity our Church had allowed you Baptism for them without it, or Godfathers, as appears in our office for private Baptism.

2. I found the defects and additions of your Directory so very great in this Office of *Baptism*, that I thought they deserved a Discourse by themselves, and am still of the same opinion.

First, There is no express Covenant ordered in your Directory, to be made in the Name of the Child Baptised, either by the Parent or any else, tho' there be no other known way of engaging a Child, that cannot Covenant for it self. Secondly, There is no profession of the Christian Faith required in the Directory from the Parent or Offerer of any Child. Thirdly, There is no solemn Recognition of the Vow of *Baptism* required from persons Baptised in their Infancy, when they come to understand their Duty, as it is in *Confirmation* with us. Fourthly, The express words of the Covenant are not prescribed out of the Word of God, but it is left to the discretion of every Minister to impose what he will on the Baptised; and some have been very indiscreet in this point, imposing the solemn League and Covenant on persons that brought Children to be Baptised, or else refusing them Baptism: all which are observed by

Mr.

Mr. Baxter, an eminent Man of your Party, many years ago in his *Infant Baptism*, Chap. 6 Object. 1. where he complains that they were taken away from you when you were in actual Possession of them; for the Substance of these (saith he) was in the Common Prayer: and he gives us to understand with regret that these plain Duties were wiped out, and the Directory made more defective than the Common-Prayer in this point.

And besides these defects in matters of so high moment as the Covenant of God, there are several Additional Conditions required by your Directory, contrary to Scripture Precedents; such as (in Mr. *Boyle's* Phrase may be reckoned) *stated Appendages* of this Sacrament; for it is ordered, that Baptism is not to be Administred in private places, but in the place of publick Worship, and in the face of the Congregation: A Rule directly contrary to Scripture Precedents; and by which many that have had a just Title to Baptism, and some that have been very desirous of it, without any fault of their own, have been denied the benefit of it. Christ Commands us to *Teach all Nations, Bapting them, &c.* and *He that repents and believes* is Entituled to Baptism, whatever his circumstances are; but tho' a Man do both these, and profess them in the most hearty manner, yet if he be not able to go to a Publick Place of Worship, or cannot procure a Congregation to be present, he shall die without this Sacrament, meerly on the account of this rigid ceremoniousness of the Directory; and many Children have thus died; which in this point is literally that Sin our Saviour taxeth, *Mark 7. 13. Making the Word of God of none effect through your traditions.*

I might instance in some other things as material as these, but I hope this may be sufficient to convince you that it was not for want of matter of exception, that I deferred imparting my thoughts to you on this

this part of Gods Worship, and indeed I am afraid that now they may not relish well with you ; but I desire you to consider that I have been forced to do it in my own Justification.

II. I am now in the Second place to shew you that Mr. Boyse's Arguments against the Cross in Baptism are of no force. His great Objection against it, is, That we make it a new Human Sacrament, and then it must be a Human Invention; and he owns that generally all Dissenters have agreed to condemn it on this account as unlawful; but I doubt not to make it appear that we ascribe nothing of a Sacramental nature to it; and that it is a great Injustice to alledge (as he doth) that we Teach otherwise. I am the more willing to handle this Subject, because I find many of you ill Instructed in the nature of Sacraments, and hope what I say may be useful to you.

I desire you therefore to consider that there are Three things necessary to make up a Sacrament. First, an Outward Visible Sign instituted by God, signifying some Spiritual Grace or Benefit which we expect from him. 2dly, An obligation on God by some promise of his, to grant us that Spiritual grace or benefit when we duly use the visible Sign. 3dly. Our use of this outward sign: For from the other two it follows as a Consequence that if we willfully omit or neglect the use of that outward or visible Sign appointed by God, we must not expect the Spiritual grace or benefit signified by it.

I think it necessary to prove by Scripture, first, that each of these belong to a Sacrament. And, 2dly, To shew that we ascribe none of them to the Cross in Baptism, and consequently that it hath nothing of a Sacrament in it.

The first Sacrament we find in Scripture is Circumcision, instituted by God Gen. xvii. 11. *Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you.* Here Circumcising the flesh of the foreskin is the outward and visible Sign

instituted by God; and the spiritual grace or benefit is the *Covenant*, whereof it is called a *Token*, and when it was duly observed, it laid an obligation on God to be a God to the person so circumcised, according to God's promise v. 7. *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee—* to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And lastly whoever wilfully refused or neglected this Sign, lost the spiritual grace or benefit signified by it. According to which we find in the 14 v. and *The uncircumcised man-child whose flesh of his foreskin, is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my Covenant.* The like is observable in the institution of the *Passover*, another Sacrament of the old Testament:

But we are more especially concerned in the *Sacraments* of the *New*. And therefore I will shew that those three things are to be found in each of them. First in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*; the *Bread* and *wine* are appointed by Ch. 11 to signify his *Body* and *Blood*: Here is the first thing; *An outward and visible sign appointed by God to signify some spiritual grace or benefit.* 2dly. The *Bread* and *wine* are declared to be the *Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, 1. Cor. x. 16. *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one Bread and one Body, for we are all partakers of that One bread.* Here is the 2d. thing required in a Sacrament, even an obligation on God when we duly use these outward Signs to communicate to us the *Body and Blood of Christ*, and make us one *Body* amongst our selves. 3dly, *whoever negligently or wilfully omits the use of these Signs must expect to lose the spiritual grace or benefit signified by them*; that it is the communion of *Christ's Body and Blood*, for he who wilfully or negligently omits communicating in the *Lords Supper* when he may have it, plainly betrays a defect in his



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his faith; Since nothing can hinder us from feeding on the *Body and Blood* of our Saviour in his Supper but want of faith to feed on him in our hearts, and therefore when we willfully neglect the use of these *Signs*, we must not expect the *Spiritual grace or benefit from God*, that is, the *Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, which is the third thing required in a Sacrament.

I am afraid few are truly convinced of this truth and yet till the generality be convinced of it, we can never expect a constant celebration of this Sacrament from Ministers, or a constant receiving of it from the People; nor will it be possible to restore the Discipline of the Church to its vigour, till people apprehend the danger of not Communicating; for the force of discipline depends chiefly on keeping refractory sinners from the *Lords Supper*; The want of which by this doctrine, is so penal, that whoever in earnest believes it, will readily submit to any terms that are not directly sinful, rather than be debarred from it.

*Baptism* is the other sacrament of the New Testament, which Christ Instituted, *Matthew 28. 19. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost.* The *Spiritual grace or benefit* of which is declared to us, *Rom. 6. 4. We are buried with him by Baptism into death; thus like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* A death therefore unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness is the *Spiritual Grace or Benefit* signified by the *Outward Sign of Water*, appointed by Christ in *Baptism*: which is the first thing necessary to a Sacrament.

a. Christ has promised, *Mark 16. 16. That he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved*: Which is an Obligation on God by his promise, to give to those who rightly use this *Sign* the *spiritual grace or benefit*.

is signified by it; which is the second thing requisite in a *Sacrament*.

3. The willful neglect or refusal of this *Sacrament* is damnable, and depriveth the obstinate refuser of the *spiritual benefit* signified in it; according to *John 3.5. Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Which is the third thing we find requisite in a *Sacrament*.

Let us now in the Second place see whether our Church ascribes any of these to the *Cross in Baptism*, for if we do not, it is a great misrepresentation to say as Mr. *Boyle* doth, p. 164. That there wants nothing but *Divine Institution* to make it as much a *Sacrament* as *Baptism* it self.

First then, we do not Teach that the *Sign of the Cross* was Instituted by God to signify any *Spiritual Grace* or benefit we expect from him. On the contrary it signifies only the duty we owe to God. It is not used to signify any *grace* or benefit communicated from God to us, as *Signs* do in *Sacraments*; but only to signify the return we ought to make to God for the benefits he has vouchsafed us in *Baptism*: That is *Not to be ashamed of Christ Crucified, but manfully to Fight under his Banner, and continue his Soldiers and Servants.*

The First thing therefore necessary to the nature of a *Sacrament* is altogether wanting to the *Sign of the Cross*. And it was incumbent on Mr. *Boyle* to shew us what *spiritual grace* or benefit from God this *Sign* signified with us, before he affirmed it to want nothing to make it a *Sacrament*, as much as *Baptism*: For since *Baptism* signifies *A death unto sin and a new birth unto Righteousness*, which are *Spiritual Graces* we expect immediately from God, he ought to have shew'd some such *Spiritual Graces* or *Benefits* which we imploy the *Cross* to signify, or else it plainly wants this part of the Nature of a *Sacrament*.

But Secondly, The second part is as much wanting

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ing. Our Church never Taught that God was obliged by any promise, or that we ought to expect on our due use of the *Sign of the Cross*, that God would grant us any *greater benefit* by it. On the contrary we unanimously Teach that the *Cross* is not used to signify any *Spiritual grace or benefit* expected from God, but to profess and declare a duty of ours to him, even that we ought not to be ashamed of his sufferings. Our Church Teacheth us to expect, that whereas by Nature we are Children of wrath, we shall in Baptism be made Children of God. And in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, we are Taught to expect The strengthening and refreshing of our Souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by Bread and Wine: But we are not Taught to expect any such thing in the use of the *Sign of the Cross*, or that God has annexed any such promise to it: And therefore to alledge that according to our Church there is nothing wanting but *Divine Institution* to make the *Sign of the Cross* as much a *Sacrament* as *Baptism* it self, is a misrepresentation, without ground or colour. Let me add that this Obligation on God by promise, to grant us the *Spiritual grace or benefit* signified by it, on our due use of the *sign*, is the very thing that Constitutes a *Sacrament*, and distinguishes it from all other *signes*; and this being wanting, tho' a *sign*, had all other things like a *Sacrament*, yet it would be no more a *Sacrament*, than an Image, that in every thing else (except a soul) were like a Man wou'd be a Man.

But Thirdly, As the two First things necessary to a *Sacrament* are wanting to it, according to our Doctrine, so is the Third; since we do not Teach that the Neglecting or omitting this Sign deprives us of any *Spiritual grace*. If we willfully neglect or refuse *Baptism* 'tis a damnable sin, and deprives us of our Title to the Kingdom of Heaven: And the like we Teach concerning willfull neglect of the *Lords Supper*; That it deprives us of the Nourishment which

we should derive from the participation of the Body and Blood of Christ. But we never Taught any such thing concerning the *sign of the Cross*. Neither can any such thing be shewed in our *Articles, Canons, or Offices*: On the contrary, the 30 Canon expressly Teaches, that the *sign of the Cross*, used after Baptism, addeth nothing to the Vertue or perfection thereof: Nor if it be omitted doth it take any thing from the substance or efficacy thereof. And accordingly when omitted in *private Baptism* by Order of the Church, 'tis declared that *in that case all is well done, and according to due Order concerning Baptising the Child*. I conclude therefore, directly contrary to what Mr. *Boyse* alledges, *That besides Divine Institution every thing is wanting to make the sign of the Cross a Sacrament, that is proper to Baptism or any other Sacrament*; And I must profess that I find as little strength in this Argument again the *Cross* as in any that Mr. *Boyse* has produced on the other heads; and the whole force of it seems to me to proceed from two mistakes concerning the Nature of *Sacraments*. First, As if they were Signs from us to God, and not wholly from God to us. And Secondly, As if we were to learn the Nature of *Sacraments* from the Schools, and the partial definitions of interested Disputants, and not from the Holy Scriptures only. Hence he has not given us one place of Scripture to prove his imperfect Account of a Sacrament, p. 464. But instead thereof tells us of the *Cross* being sett up to represent Christ Crucified. Our being brought under solemn Obligations to confess the Faith of Christ, and of Moral Causality ascribed to this Ceremony. All which have little to do with the Nature of a Sacrament. I would have you better consider for what a Sacrament is intended, then that you should be led to use these as the only design of it; If we keep to the Holy Scriptures, and to the words thereof, as I have laid them down, we shall have

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a much better understanding of its Nature.

III. But to proceed in the Third place, I say that the use of the Cross in Baptism is warranted by Scripture. And here I must desire leave to be something large and particular, that I may explain this point to ordinary Capacities: And in order to enable you to Judge of it, I desire you to consider,

1. That we are obliged to express the inward Reverence and Sense of our Minds concerning God, by some outward means; whereby we may preserve and increase that Sense in our selves, and may make appear to others what we think of God and Holy things. Thus we are obliged to express our Sense of God's Excellencies, by Praises; our Sense of our Dependence on him, by Confession of his Power and Prayers, our Sense of having Offended him by Confession of our Sins, and our Resolution of Amendment, by Promises and Vows.

2. The Scriptures command us to express these inward Thoughts and Sense of our Minds, by Actions, as well as by Words. Thus we express the Submission of our Minds, by Adoration; our Humility before God, by Kneeling, or Prostration &c. Which Actions, the Scriptures have as much Warranted, in our Addresses to God, as they have Words, and generally speaking, they are rather more Effectual and Sincere Expressions of the Sense of our Minds, than Words.

3. The Scriptures teach us to Express our Thoughts and Sense of our Minds, in such Words and Actions as on other serious Occasions serve to express the like Sense and Dispositions of Mind: so that we are not to invent new Words or Actions to signify our Submission or Thankfulness, &c. to God; but we are to use such as the general Custom of our Country have made significant in the like cases; for by using them our Neighbours will best understand us, and we ourselves will be most likely to be stirred up by them.

That it is our Duty to use these Actions in the Wor-

ship of God, will appear from the whole tenour of the Scriptures: Thus, because *bowing the body* in all places of the World argues *Respect*, therefore the Scriptures Warrant our *bowing* when we come into God's presence; Thus, because by the general Custom of the World, *Kneeling* is a token of humbly Supplicating those to whom we Kneel; therefore in our Confessions and humblest Addresses to God the Scriptures prescribe to us to Kneel; Thus, because Servants *stand* when they attend their Masters, therefore in our *Praises* and in some other Services we pay to God, the Scriptures Warrant us to *stand*. Thus, because in the Eastern Countries those that came into the Courts of Princes, put off their shoes out of neatness or respect, therefore God sometime required his Worshipers to approach his presence in the like manner. Thus, because it was the Custom for Masters to give their servants a *new Name*, at their admission into their Families, therefore God gave *Abraham* a *new Name*, at his admitting him to his peculiar service; and hence came the Custom of giving a *Name* at Circumcision. Thus, it was the Custom of the World to express a Sense of deep Sorrow by *Fasting*, lying on the Ground, covering themselves with Sackcloth, Renting their Garments, and Beating their Bodies; and hence we find Holy Men using all these, to express their sorrow for their sins. Thus, they expressed their Religious as well as Civil *joy*, by Singing, Feasting, Dancing, sending Portions to their Friends, by White Garments, and more then Ordinary Neatness in their Dress. And of this Nature there are many other instances: Which fully shew us that the scriptures warrant us to make use of such fit Actions to express our thoughts and sense of religious things, as the Custom of each Country has made proper and significant to express the passions of our minds on other occasions; and do no more bind us to the particular *Actions* of holy men mention'd therein, if they have  
lost



lost their significancy, then they bind us to their words, which we do not understand. This appears from many instances, of scripture *Actions* now disus'd by us, and of others brought into use, Particularly that of *Uncovering the head*; an action never used in scripture as a sign of reverence, yet lawfully used by us (from the forementioned Implied Rule of scripture) because Custom has given it a general signification of Respect.

4. *Glorying in the sufferings of Christ*, and professing our selves ready to follow him, even to the most ignominious death on the Cross, is a duty incumbent on us by the Scripture Gal. vi. 14. *God forbid I should Glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* therefore we ought to express this duty, and Glory in it, by such outward means as are most proper, and do most effectually and generably signify it. And since by universal Custom there are actions as well as words that signify this our *Glorying in the Cross of Christ*, Scripture precedents warrant and oblige us to use both.

5. Making the *sign of the Cross*, is an action which Universal Custom in all ages and Churches since the Apostles time till the Reformation have applyed to signify your *Glorying in the sufferings of Christ*, and 'tis understood by all those that have heard of Christianity, tho' enemies to it, to have this Signification. Therefore the Scriptures warrant the use of it to this purpose. as much as *standing Uncovered* in token of reverence at our prayers, and the Scriptures themselves have given the occasion and ground and warrant for this signification of the *Cross*, by expressing our undertaking and owning the Christian Religion by the phrase of taking up the Cross Matt. xvi. 24. *If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow me* And 1. Cor. i. 17. *Preaching the Cross* is Preaching the Gospel; And in several other places the whole of our religion as Christian, is signified by

by the *Cross*; Therefore to signify our professing and *Glorying in Christ Crucified*, by making the *sign of the Cross*, has better foundation in Scripture, and is much more warranted by universal Custom than *uncovering the Head* has to signify *Reverence*, of which there is no dispute between us, but that it is agreeable.

6. 'Tis very proper at *Baptism* to make a profession of our *Glorying in the Cross of Christ*; because we then solemnly engage to *take it up*; that is (as before explained) to take upon us his whole Religion. To make such a profession by *words*, of this and of all the Duties we then undertake, I think is owned to be lawful by all; and we think very requisite; and accordingly require it from every one who is Baptised.

I Add in the 7th. place; That it is not only warrantable to do it by *words*, but likewise by *actions*. This must appear reasonable to you if you reflect on your own practice, in giving your Children *Names* at your baptism; which, as I have already shewed, signifies your giving up their *Names* to Christ, and engaging them to be Christ's servants. Your *Names* therefore are a lasting Badge and Token to you through your whole lives, of your Dedication to Christ's Service, and an Obligation on you to behave your selves accordingly. yet this *Significant Ceremony*, added to Baptism, has nothing of a Sacrament in it, any more then I have shew'd the *sign of the Cross* to have; and both are equally warranted, by Scripture.

This you ought the rather to observe, because the only Question your Directory requires to be put to the person that offers the Child to Baptism, is concerning the *Name* thereof; having left out those Scripture Questions that relate to the Faith and Obligations into which the Child is Baptised.

I wou'd desire you likewise to reflect on another Ceremony you have added to the other Sacrament, I mean

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mean giving *Tickets* to such as are to be admitted to the Lords Supper, upon offering of which they are admitted to that Priviledge: In this Ceremony (for so I must call it) there is an *Outward and Visible Sign*, a Ticket. 2dly, An *inward and Spiritual Grace*, your aptitude and title to the Lord's Supper and Communion of Saints, found on your Examination when you receive the Ticket. 3dly, It is a *Badg and Token* whereby Priviledged Members are distinguished from those that are without. Lastly, It is a sort of a necessary *Term of Communion*, since those that neglect this *Badg* shall not be admitted to the Sacrament, yet I suppose you reckon this *Badge* or Symbol of Communion to be Warranted by the general Rules of Scripture, tho' it is plain there is no such Ground for it there, as for the use of the *Cross*. But,

3dly, We are not without Scripture Precedents of signifying the particular Obligations that lie on us in the Sacraments, by *Actions* as well as *Words*. Since our Saviour signified the Humility and Love we ought to bear towards one another, by *Washing his Disciples Feet*, at the Institution of the Lord's Supper; and St. Peter, who refused this significant Ceremony, was severely threatned for it. Thus, dipping intirely under water in Baptism, was a significant Ceremony we find sometimes used, as a Token of our being Buried with Christ in Baptism; to which signification the Apostle alludes, *Rom. 6. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into death.* And to the same purpose *Col. 1. 12.* There was another Ceremony of Baptism which consisted in the Change of Cloths; and this was likewise significant, and the Apostles allude to it, *Gal. 3. 27. For as many of you as have been baptis'd into Christ have put off Christ; and to the same allude those Phrases of putting off the Old Man, and putting on the New; as is confessed by the best Interpreters: and the Apostle useth them not only to signify the Duties and Obligations*

gations we undertake at Baptism, but likewise to stir us up to perform them.

The like is observable in the *Lord's-Supper*; The particular Duties of which are signified in Scripture by several ceremonies annexed to the celebration thereof. 'Tis a special duty to lay aside all hatred, and to be in perfect Charity with one another, when we come to that sacrament; And this duty was signified first by an *Holy Kiss* mentioned *Rom. 16. 16.* and in several other places of Scripture. And 2dly, by *Feasts of Charity* described, *1 Cor. 11.* and mentioned *Jude, 12.* both which continued many years in the Church, as *Tokens* and *Badges* and *Symbols* of the duty of *Charity*, which were profess'd in that Sacrament: And yet none of all these particular Ceremonies can be term'd Sacraments; from all which I conclude that it is as proper and as agreeable to Scripture to signify our Obligation in Baptism, not to be ashamed of *Christ Crucified*, by making the sign of the *Cross*, as it was to signify our *Love* and *Unity* by a *Kiss* or a *Feast*; and by consequence, that the use of the *Cross* in Baptism is Warranted by Scripture.

To Conclude, neither Scripture nor Reason hinder us from using such signs in Expressing or Professing our Duty to God, as properly and by general consent signify it. On the Contrary, they Warrant us to use such signs as well as Words; which Words are signs themselves, made significant only by Custom: whereas many Actions have the ground of their significancy from nature.

But here we must take care not to institute signs to signify and oblige God to confer his Favours or Grace on us; For that were to limit him; And 'tis only he by his institution and promise can so oblige himself. The want of distinguishing between these two sort of signs, seems to me to have occasioned all those objections against the sign of the Cross, which are commonly urged to us as if we made it a sacrament.

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That which therefore was incumbent on Mr. Boyse in this point, was to prove by Scripture that it is unlawful to signify or express the particular Duties we undertake in the Sacrament, by Actions that are by general Custom expressive of those Duties. Otherwise, to declare this to be unlawful, is the same Presumption and Offence as to declare some Meats unlawful; and is a certain Instance of your Teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of Men. For to say an Action is Unlawful that God has not made so, is the same Presumption and Offence as to say certain Meats are Forbidden that are not; which is a thing seriously to be considered by you.

Thus much I have thought needful to lay before you concerning the sign of the Cross; and I think is sufficient to convince any unbiass'd person, that you have no cause to separate from our worship on that account.

As for the rest of Mr. B's Remarks, which I have not here considered, I presume none will suspect that there is more Difficulty in them, than in the points I have already examined. But indeed I must declare that I have met with none among you that have alledged Mr. B's reasons for absenting themselves from our Publick Worship. And therefore I cannot think it material to go about to confute a single person and a stranger; For should I confute his Principles, perhaps you, for whose satisfaction only I intend this, wou'd think your selves unconcern'd in the dispute. But if I shall find that his objections have really moved scruples in you, and your Ministers will give their full approbation of his book, and manner of handling this controversy, I shall then think my self oblig'd to give you a just Account of the whole, as I have here done of some parts of it; And particularly of the principal Matters of fact contained in it; The truth of which if any persist to question, I shall then also publish the

Yours

*Vouchers and Authorities* I have for them; which I am not willing to do, out of tenderness to you as well as on other accounts till the last necessity.

At present I must leave with you this caution, as well in respect of Mr. B's *Remarks*, as of any other Answer that may come out to my book, that I do not think that either you or I are concern'd in arguments that are not founded on Scripture, or in any Answers to my proofs that contradict the Letter of the holy Scriptures; as most of Mr. B's do; particularly such as concern *saying or singing* our Psalms, *Answering* in our Prayers and Hymns; and *Feyning*, *our Voices* in our confessions and addressees to God.

To Conclude, I desire to deal with you as becomes a *True Pastor*, Admonishing and Instructing you in the Spirit of Meekness; I neither have, nor can have any indirect or Wordly ends in telling you these things; nor can you imagine that I either propose or design any advantage to my self by it, but only your good. I need not seek to please Men; neither if I designed it, were this the way to attain it. Some Truths are very uneasy, and I know that nothing can be more ungrateful to you, then to give you to understand that the Worship you suppose so pure, and so conformable to the Word of God, has no express Warrant in Scripture for it, and that all these things in our Worship that you have so long been born in hand to be only *Inventions of Men*, are really the dictates of God's Spirit in the Holy Scriptures. This I know touches you very near; and considering all things, I cannot but thank you, and do thank you, for the Entertainment you have given my Book; and I hope it will yet do more good among you. I must again intreat you to take my Addressees to you in good part; and not to be offended with me, because I endeavour to tell you the *Truth*. They that know me will allow *Plain-Dealing* to be part of my Character.



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facter. But Remember that nothing is more apt to provoke Mankind then *Truth*; and if you meet with any Book, written in Answer to mine, that Discovers the Writer to have been in a Passion when he wrote it, you may look on it as a probable Argument of the *Truth* of what I have proposed. And if upon reading what I have wrote, you find any motion within your selves towards passion, consider well whether it proceed not from the same cause; namely, my declaring the *Truth* to you.

I must stand or fall to my great Master, as to my sincerity in studying your good; to him I am answerable for the discharge of my Office, and of those Obligations from it under which I ly. The Conscience of this has put me on these Addresses; and I beseech our good God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who purchased his Church with his blood, and promised his Spirit to his Disciples to guide them into all *Truth*, to dispose and prepare your Hearts for the reception thereof, and to incline you to hearken to the Instructions offered you out of his Word by

*Your truly Affectionate Pastor.*

*Londonderry,  
1. May, 1694.*

*Will. Derry.*

## Errata.

**P**Age 6. l. 18. *r.* gratefulest. pa. 21. l. 36. for meen.  
*r.* mean, pa. 35. l. 38. for hearts their, *r.* their  
bearts, p. 49. l. 9. *r.* examining, p. 55. l. 9. *r.* for con-  
taining, *r.* contained, p. 72. l. 23. for much, must. p.  
84. l. 24. for attendance *r.* attendants. p. 87. l. 14.  
after Christ, *r.* as. p. 89. l. 2. *r.* different. p. 90. l. 37.  
before Self. 3. for and *r.* are. p. 97. l. 34. for thro' *r.*  
throw. p. 104. l. 13. *r.* substituted. *ibid.* 20. for per-  
fixt *r.* prefixt. p. 118. l. 11. for meen *r.* mean. p. 128.  
l. 27. for our *r.* own. p. 147, l. 1. *r.* teachers. *ibid.* 4.  
after these a comma. p. 152. l. 22. for oftner then *r.*  
for once that. p. 163. l. 29. for first *r.* strit.

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F I N I S.

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